SLAM
SKATEBOARDING

Riley Pavey
SKATER OF THE YEAR

PUB TRIVIA
Sean Ryan

Jay Runciman
INTERVIEW

Noah “Nog” Smith
SIX PIX

Matthieu Lucas D’Souza
NEW GEN

Rome Collyer
PULL-OUT POSTER

THE MAKING OF
Vans Lava

ISSUE 237 AUTUMN 2023
AUS $14.95 INC GST
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+ **Noah Nayef**
Shane Azar / Noah Bardas
Geoff Campbell / Karma Tsocheff

VISIT…

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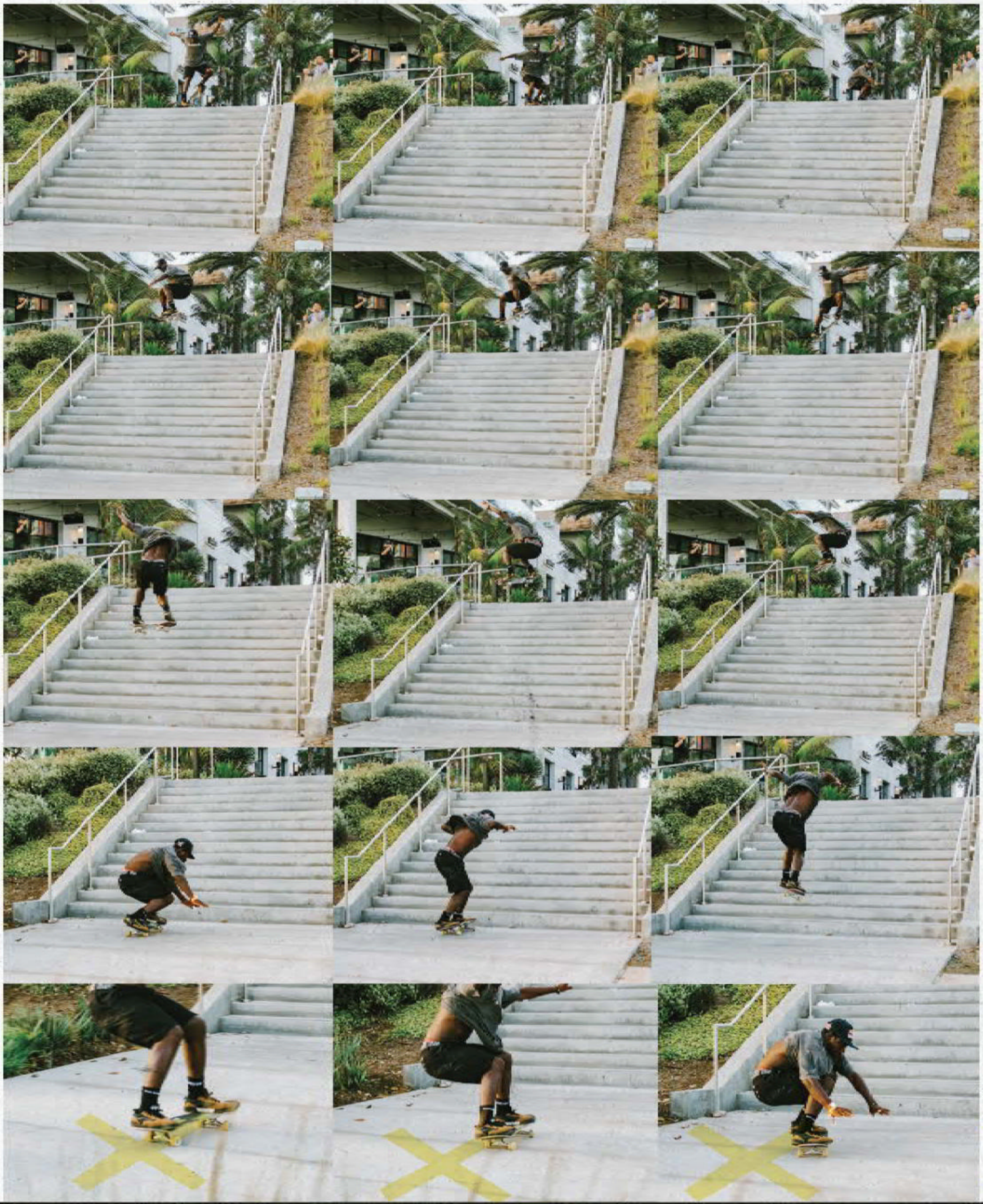
ZION WRIGHT



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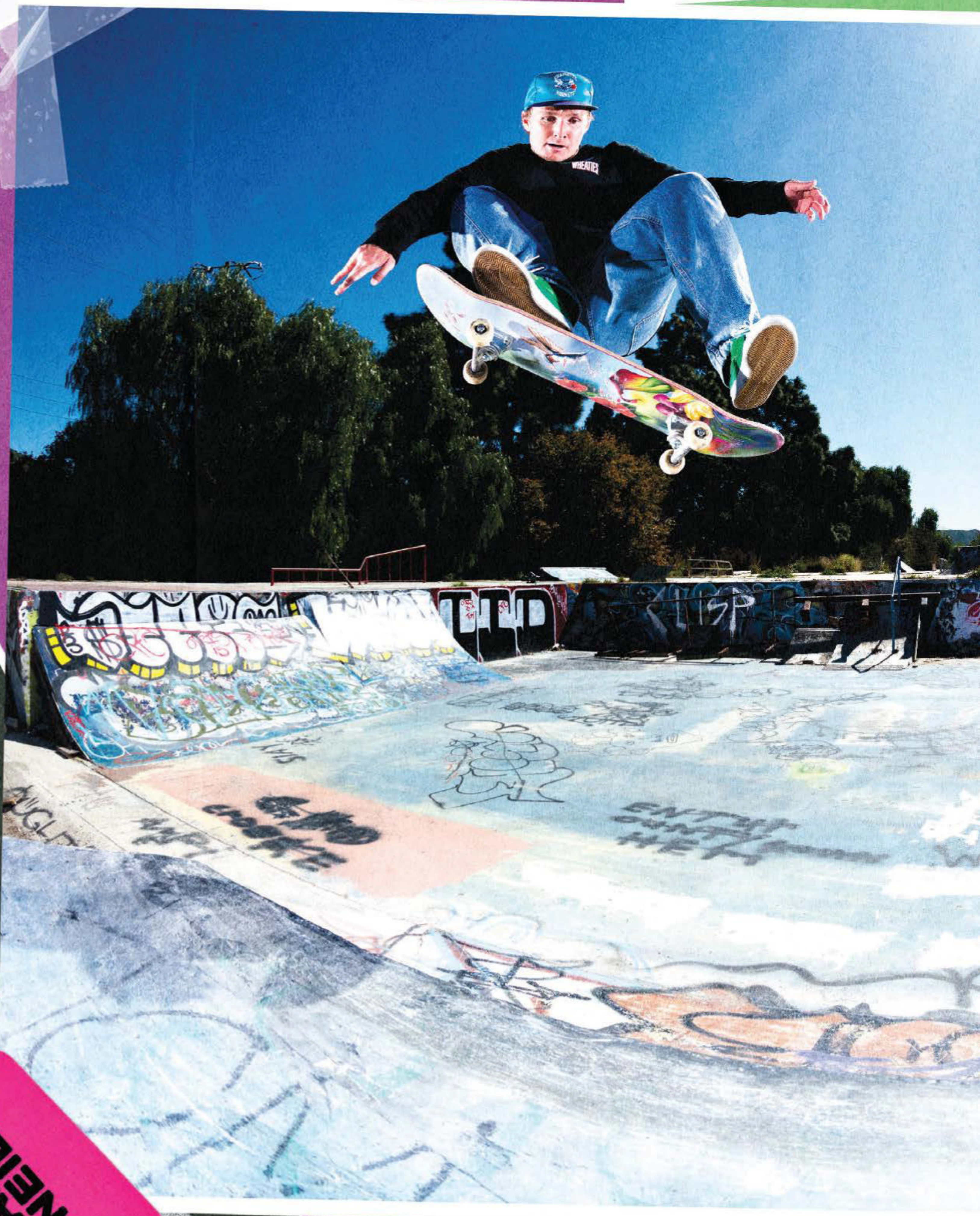

SHA
O'NEILL

SWITCH FS FLIP PHOTO: SCHREINER

SHANE O'NEILL
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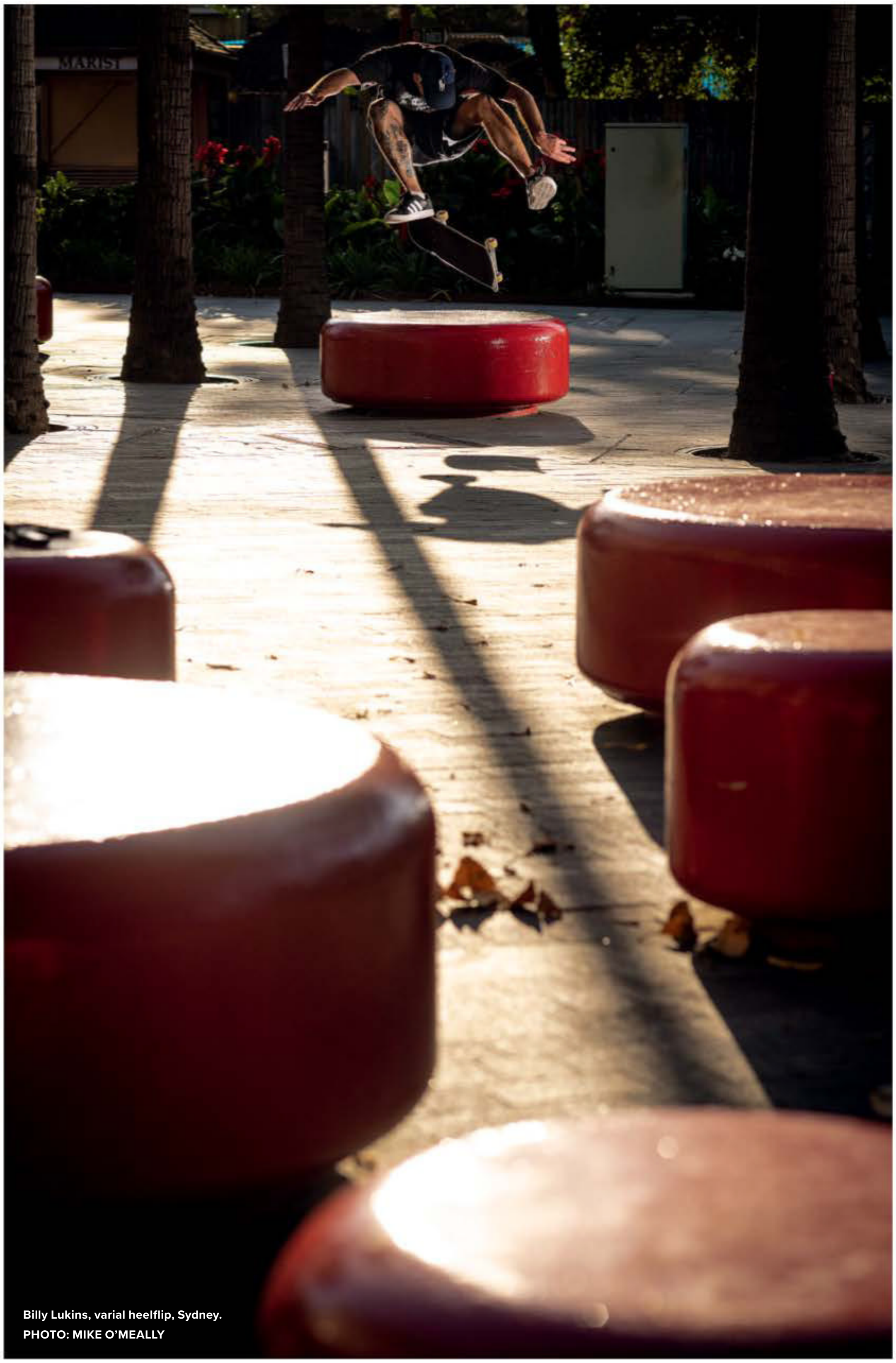
Most skaters are known to have at least one trick that they have on absolute lock. Even those all-rounders who have an endless bag of tricks, there's still that one unwavering sure shot they can pull the trigger on almost anywhere and anytime. Think Andrew Reynolds with the frontside flip, Chima Ferguson and the back three, or Jamie Foy pinching a front crook. What makes these tricks come so easily? Repetition over time sets in the sweet stillness and a high confidence level that can make a trick feel like second nature.

What's your go-to? Think of your staple – the trick that rarely lets you down. I remember back in the day when I was judging a comp in Sydney city and one of the competitors wasn't happy with the result. He scoffed at me, "Go Smith grind another rail, why don't you?" In hindsight, he was right. I flogged the Smith horse hard back then. But hey, the Smith grind was my tried-and-true move, and I still love them.

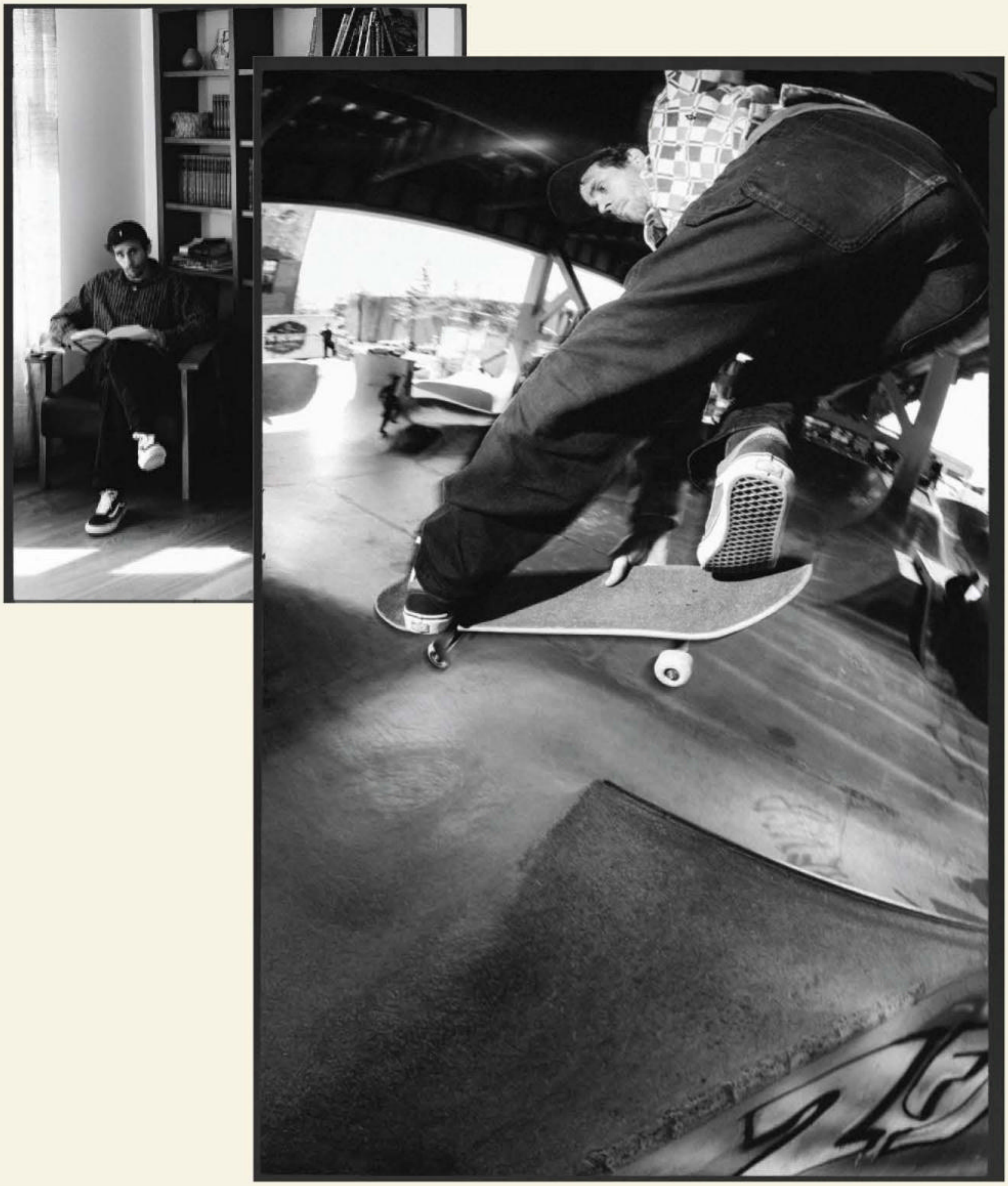
Thumb through the pages of this issue, and every skater featured has a primary trick they're known for, either by doing it on every session or by having it covered extensively. Take Riley Pavey, for instance – our new Slam SOTY covered in the first feature in this special edition. Pavey's got an arsenal of tricks, but I'm pretty sure he could crooks almost anything he sizes up. "Stand at the top of that crooks on the high rail in *Internet Birthday*," said filmer extraordinaire Geoff Campbell. "No one else is stepping to that."

In this edition, we cover the other three Slam awards from this year, and our New Gen of the Year, Noah Bardas, is a wallie maniac. Noah Nayef, Video Part of the Year winner, can wield his board in any way he wishes, but his switch kickflip form is firmly entrenched in my mind. And our new Hall of Fame inductee, Shane Azar, has had switch backside flips on lock for over two decades.

Sean Ryan is renowned for his phenomenal ollie impossible – it's up there with the late, great Dylan Rieder's form. Sean's a smart guy, so for this edition, we pick his brain in a game of pub trivia. Adelaide's Jay Runciman has a solid 10-page interview in this issue, and he's also got a solid back Smith. Noah "Nog" Smith, who came through with a handful of photos right on deadline weekend, is simply known for his high-speed ollies.


Billy Lukins, varial heelflip, Sydney.
PHOTO: MIKE O'MEALLY

So, why am I harping on about this topic of go-to tricks? When this Billy Lukins photo from Mike O'Meally landed in my inbox, I instantly thought about how Billy owns the varial heelflip – or shove-it heel if you please. Not only did it get me thinking about different skaters and their respective go-to tricks, it gave me a good reason to run this incredible image with my Introduction. Enjoy this edition and fire off your old faithful on your next sesh. **– Trent Fahey**



....Girl Skateboards

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AUTUMN EDITION 2023

Adelaide Norris jams into a lengthy 50-50 in Melbourne. PHOTO: BRYCE GOLDER

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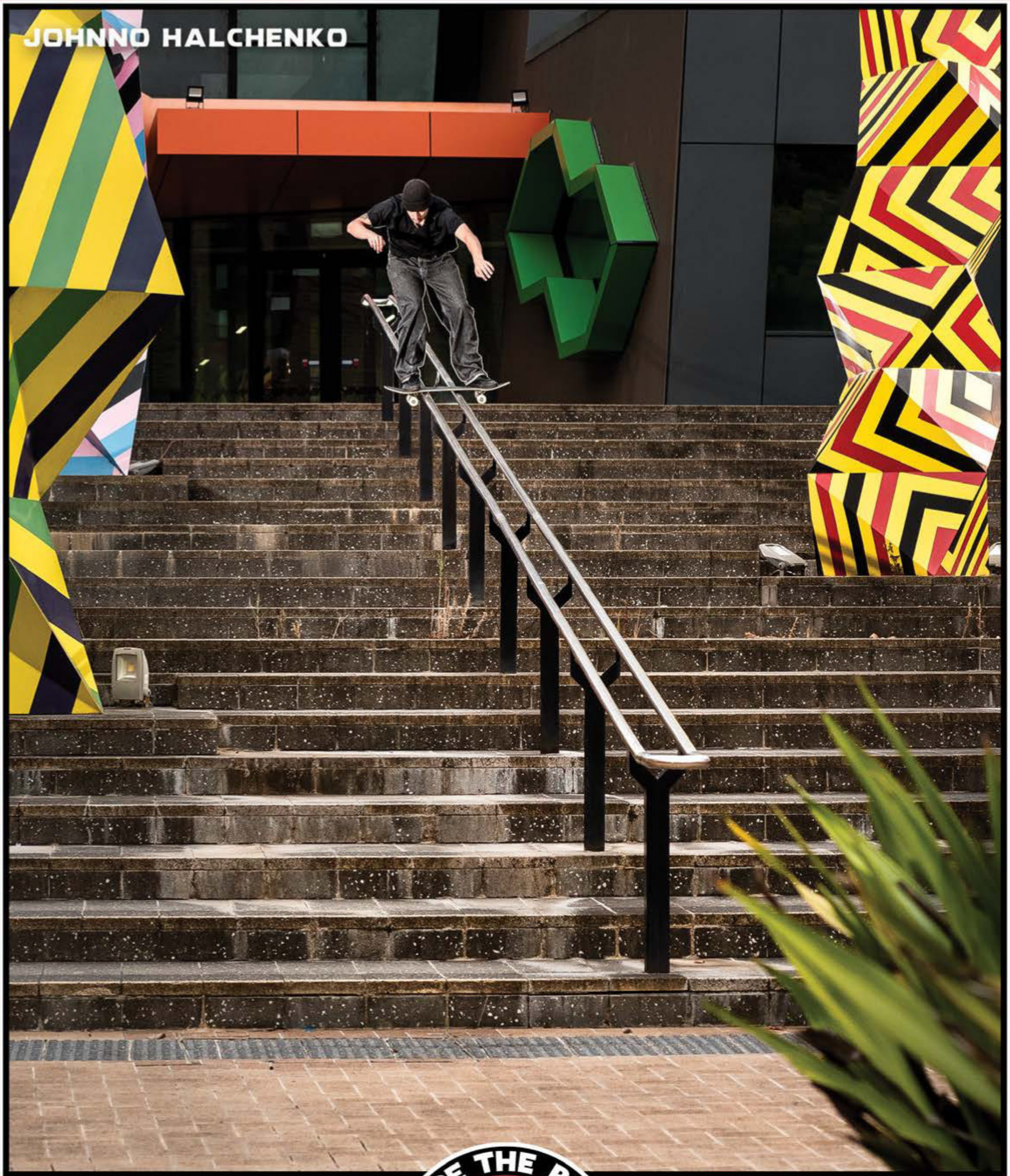
COVER: **RILEY PAVEY went to war for this cover shot. Our new SOTY got broken off in battle, but Pavey didn’t give up and defeated the Christchurch rail with an ollie over the back of the rail to 50-50. PHOTO: BRYCE GOLDER**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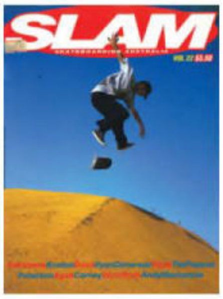
FROM THE ARCHIVES

LOOKING BACK AT ISSUE 22

Words by James Turvey
Cover photo by Andrew Currie

I've been working on a book about the history of Australian skateboarding magazines, and I end up scouring my archives on a daily basis. Now with 237 issues (and counting) my Slam boxes take up more space than all the other Australian magazines combined. Slam has literally been there throughout my entire 32 years as a skateboarder. When I grab an old issue, it brings back memories; what tricks I was learning at the time or what board I was riding. But there's more to it than that. The mags themselves are printed storage devices of our history; we can use them to study what was happening during a particular era. They keep a record of what has changed and what hasn't.

I thought I'd grab an early issue from three decades ago and take you for a little walk through it.



Issue 22 hit the newsstands in 1993, 30 years before the issue you're holding right now. That's Seb Steele on the cover, backside heelflipping the hip at Queensland's Beenleigh skatepark. The photo was taken by Andrew Currie, who was also the 18-year-old editor of Slam. Seb was one of the most photographed Australian skateboarders of the time, with coverage in nearly every mag. He was part of the new guard reshaping the Australian skateboarding landscape. He skated everything and looked good doing it.

The cover's composition is atypical of the issues that came before and after it. It's perfectly colour blocked, and the layout is clean and simple. Those look like 39mm wheels he's riding, which were standard at the time, and not much bigger than the aggregate used beneath the yellow paint of Beenleigh's hip. Although you'd never see a flip trick over a skatepark hip on the cover of a modern magazine, no one would bat an eyelid if you turned up to a session in Seb's outfit today. The low-cut Chucks are a distinct departure from the chunky Airwalks from prior issues.

Seb also features two pages from the cover in a British Knights ad. British Knights, despite their name, were a sneaker brand from NYC, and in 1993, they were far more mainstream than any skate shoe on the market. I would love to know the story behind BK trying to enter the Australian skateboarding market and how much Seb got paid for that ad, if at all, because he sure as hell never had any other coverage in them. [Ed note: Seb said there was no pay. He just copped a pair of dodgy shoes and some shirts which he swapped for weed].

The debate about core versus mainstream footwear companies was already a hot topic 30 years ago. By far, the most popular shoe in this issue is the Puma suede, which is seldom worn by any skaters in Australia these days. It's noted that Davo [Michael Davidson], Alex Smith and Mike Luzar are riding for Puma in the *sponsor-shit* section. However, the first line of the first letter in *backchat*, Slam's mail column says, "Fuck Puma, fuck Adidas and fuck this bias against vertical skateboarding." Andrew Currie was already known for being a well-rounded and diverse skateboarder adept at both street and transition. He articulated his response to the letter perfectly, stating, "The reason less people skate vert is not due to the magazine's phasing out strategy, but rather because of the lack of facilities. Slam is proud to promote street skating because it is the most accessible terrain for anyone that wants to ride a skateboard."

It's hard to overlook the impact Cuzza had on the Australian skate industry in the '90s. At the time of Issue 22's publication, Andrew was not only the editor, but also a photographer and writer for the magazine, all while maintaining his skate career. Despite the many hats he was wearing, Cuzza always managed the right amount of playfulness in his writing, taking a similar approach to material you'd find in DIY punk zines of the same era; that the rules aren't important, but the content is. Currie interviews himself for the issue's editorial, and when explaining why he likes interviews, he writes: "It's the magazine's duty to communicate to its readers what's going down in the most accurate way possible. As an experienced magazine collector, I'm confident that the most effective means of communicating this message is via the medium of interview."

The Michael "Davo" Davidson interview discusses the recession and how lucky he is to be working at Surf, Dive 'n' Ski, due to the employment crisis, something many of today's skateboarders would understand due to the current economic climate. Davo's interview also features the first published photo by Mike O'Meally (although he is in the background of one of Aaron Brown's photos on the opposite page). After the caption, he is credited with, "Photo: Mike Om", not even using his full name.

It's undebatable that Mike O'Meally is the most famous Australian skateboarding photographer of all time and the fact that he started his career in Slam is pretty special. His flash cord can be seen running up the side of the steps Davo is blasting. It's unique because everything is cordless now, but it also adds to the DIY flare that skate mags still had.

Cult graffiti icon, Jisoe, can be found in this issue, frontside nosesliding a Gold Coast ledge. Before Eddie Martin's documentary of the same name, Jisoe was simply Justin Hughes, a skateboarder from Adelaide, who first appeared a few issues earlier in Slam number 18 with the caption: "A guy from Adelaide, we think his name is Justin."

what tricks are fresh right now?

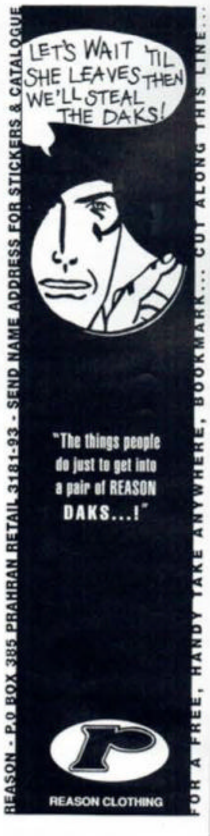
Big Al. inflip at Prahran.

Justin Hughes, surfers paradise, (Gold Coast) Photo: AC

Big Al Photo: AC

SLAM

Although Justin would continue to get coverage throughout the early '90s, it's interesting that in this issue, he was chosen to feature in an article alongside legends such as Al Boglio and Tas Pappas. Some people are destined for fame no matter what they turn their hands to, and it's possible that Justin would've become a bigger name in skateboarding if he didn't find graffiti.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The main thing I notice when I get to the end of issue 22 is the absence of women in the magazine. Skateboarding has come a long way to be more inclusive. Although men still make up the bulk of skateboarding photos in current magazines, it's quite jarring when there's no coverage or ads of women at all. However, there is an advertisement for Libby Hobday's Reason Clothing, which was one of, if not the first, Australian skate clothing companies started by a woman. Maybe this is something I can write about further in a later issue, hint hint, ed... ▲

PHOTO: BRYCE GOLDER
HAYLEY WILSON
SPITFIRE WHEELS
KEEPING THE UNDERGROUND LIT

BEING YOUR OWN SOTY

THE POWER OF GOAL SETTING

Words by Nathan "Ook" Ho
Photo by Kurt Hodge

Summer is a great time of year, watching standout skaters from all over the country run for the title of Slam Skater of the Year. In the past, I've had the honour and pleasure of seeing some of my closest skate-homies be nominated, and in other years, like 2010 and 2016, I celebrated with my friends Dane Burman and Jake Hayes when they each won this incredible award.

I vividly recall the week after Dane won the Slam SOTY award. He visited my home and was kind enough to hang his oversized-novelty cheque on the wall in my room. I remember staring at the cheque with Dane's name on it and the words "Skater of the Year". It got me thinking, what makes someone Skater of the Year material? Is it their qualities as a person? The number of followers they have on social media? The videos and photos that they're releasing?

Some of you may love it, others might not, and I have come to think of the SOTY process as looking at the most influential, impactful skaters who have been doing their thing and getting noticed for their on-and-off-board expressions. Thinking about the times that Dane and Jake won SOTY, I can remember thinking about the influence that they each had in my life and what I learnt from them – both inside and outside of skateboarding.

Having had the pleasure of growing up skating with two former SOTYs and watching the content produced by all the other SOTYs over the years, there's something that they all have in common: they're focused, driven, and determined. Intention creates purpose, and this means that with the right mindset and motivations, you can, within your capabilities, progress to do things beyond your comfort level and exceed your own expectations. I can imagine that the energy and presence of any former SOTY could rub off onto you. This has the potential to inspire you and teach you some things about yourself, too.

While most of us will never win SOTY, the question of what makes a SOTY is a valuable one. It prompts you to be more than excited by what you see of those around you and those that you see in your favourite magazine. On a deeper level, how do your observations of others motivate and inspire you to set goals that are both skate-related and life-related, to lead you towards making the best of every day that you live?

Each year, you learn, grow and transform as a result of your experiences around others. Your friends help to shape your life experiences. And this brings us to the next question I've been pondering: How do I become my own SOTY and make this my best year yet?

At first glance, some goals might seem overwhelming, impossible or too far away to even want to ponder on for too long, let alone put any effort or energy into. But setting goals can help you to find your focus and drive. As long as they are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timed, you can tap into your possibility and potential. In this way, a goal evolves beyond a to-do list or a daydream. It's something that you can record in a journal, notepad or writing app on your phone. It's like setting a destination on your map and adding stops along the way to check in with yourself to ensure you're on the right path.

With skating, some examples of goal setting could take on the form of what you want to learn, new places you want to skate and tricks you want to document. Outside of skating, you may have goals that revolve around your studies at school, getting a new job, a creative project, saving for that holiday, or relationship goals. Whatever the goal in mind, breaking down your goal into smaller steps can be helpful. See your goal through the lens of progression.

Thirteen years on from Dane Burman's SOTY win, and he's still manifesting mammoth rails to grind. Hallway 50-50.

Say you wanted to learn to kickflip. What would you need to learn first? To balance on the board and roll, to be able to manoeuvre your skateboard, to tic tac, to ollie, to ollie while rolling with progressive amounts of speed, to learn to position your feet for a kickflip, to flip the board a full rotation, to pop a kickflip and catch it with one foot, to learn to kickflip on grass, flat ground and moving.

Some other examples, like, what do you do if you want to purchase something? Where does the money for that exchange come from? You can set savings goals or milestones to help you track your progress and see how your deposits add up. Or if you wanted to work in a certain occupation one day, you would break down this ambition into, say, looking for work experience, getting in touch with someone with the experience, volunteering, learning all that you can about it and looking into what your learning pathways or training options are. Nothing is impossible if you can learn to detach from how far away something might be and pull apart the process into smaller steps.

This may seem overly methodical or extensive to some; however, by breaking down a goal into smaller sub-goals, and ticking them off, you develop a stronger sense of achievement. By making progress that you can see and measure, you can start to feel good about yourself because your brain releases a chemical called dopamine. Dopamine is the feel-good brain chemical, the motivation molecule driving you to seek rewards in achieving goals and getting things done. The higher your dopamine, the higher your focus, alertness, creativity, long-term memory and concentration.

Simply put, the more conscious effort you put in, the more results you achieve as the momentum builds and multiplies. Think of applying this to your skating and life. There can be a process and structure to what can seem far away, distant or beyond you, and if you know which direction you want to go in, you can still make progress while feeling good about where you are at. This gives you more reason to celebrate yourself and the journey that entails.

Adopt this approach to your life and skating – regardless of your age and where you're at – and you'll become your own SOTY. As your intentions become clear, you'll know what you want and how to do it. You'll value the significance of progression and building up, where you learn to work your way from 0 to 100 and not just expect yourself to get there instantly without putting in the work. Slam's former SOTYs have the work ethic, personality and drive that keeps their fire burning, and their skating and lives reflect this. This fire burns in you, too, and you can become your own SOTY this year and beyond.

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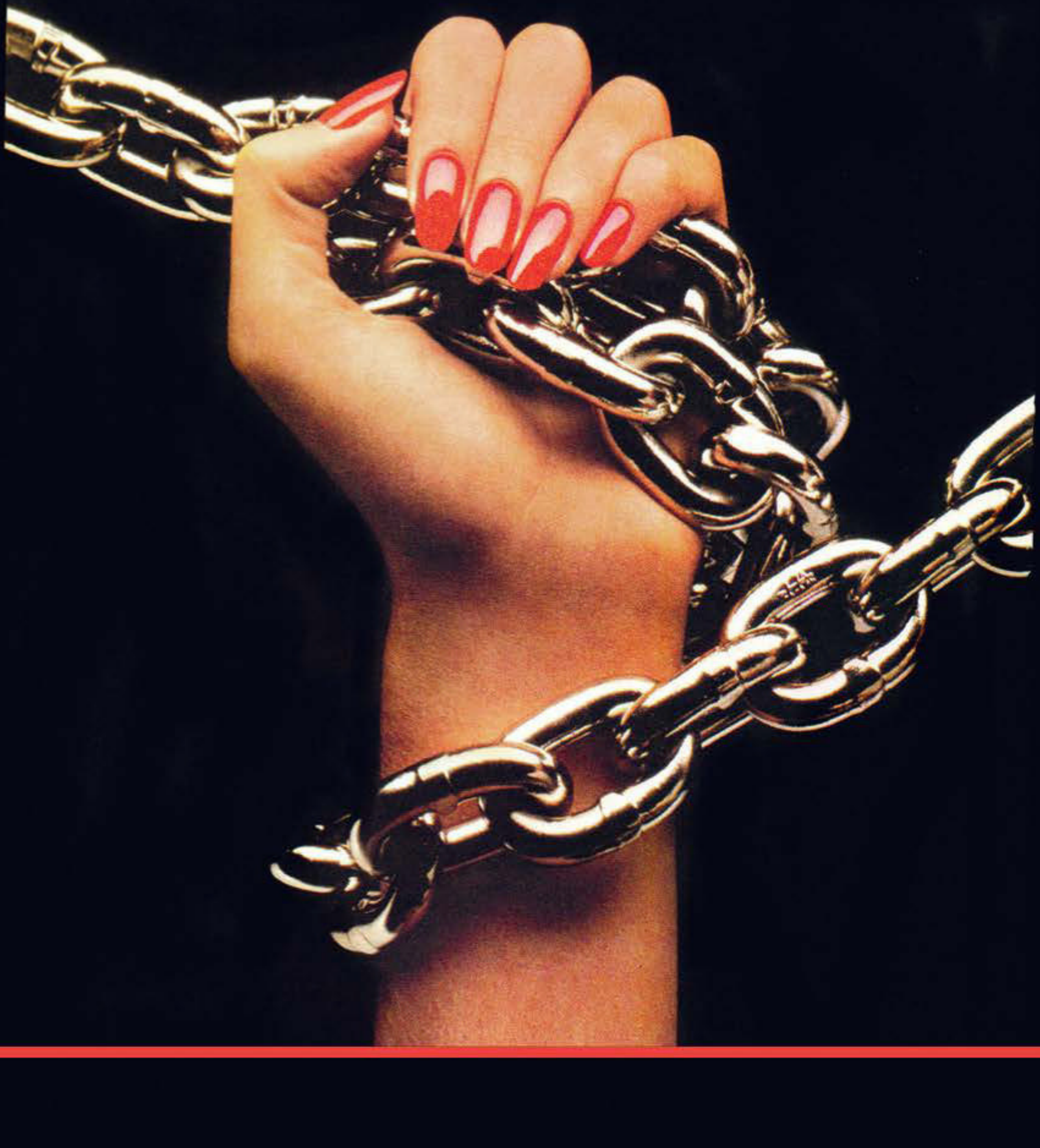


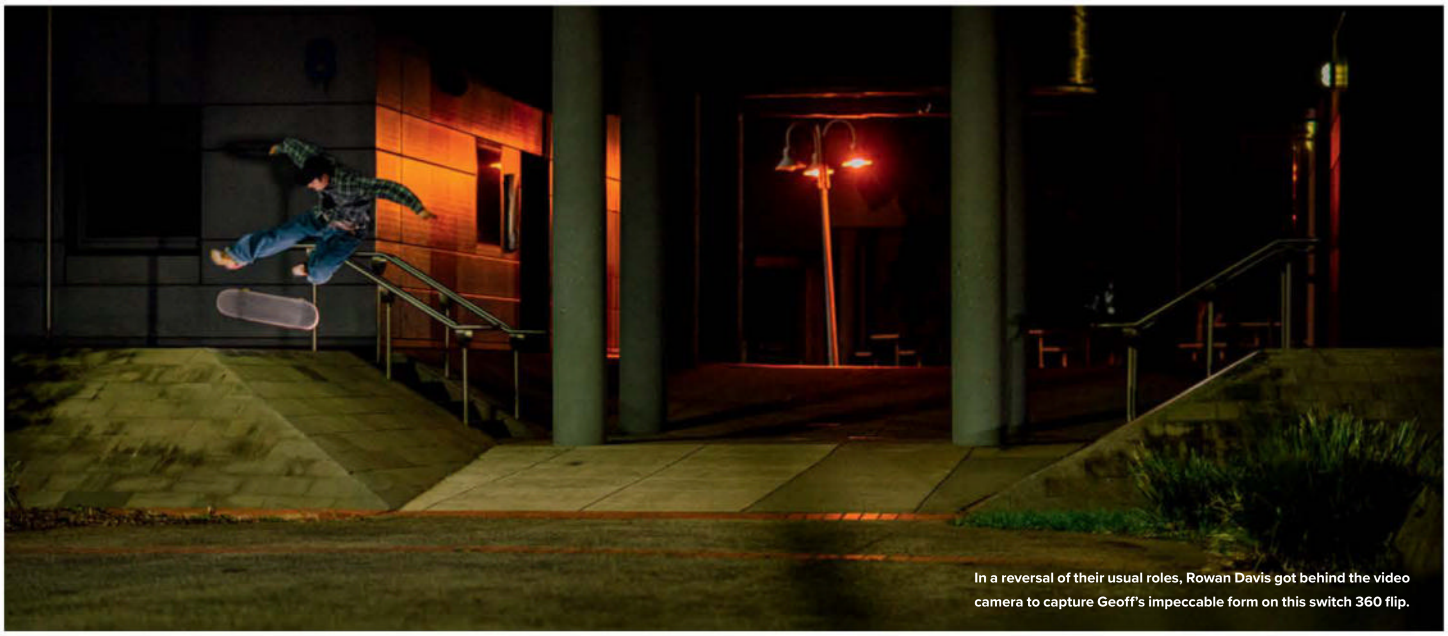
GEOFF CAMPBELL

As told to Trent Fahey
Photo by Bryce Golder

CHECKING IN AFTER HIS THIRD ACL SURGERY

"I can't really film properly at the moment because I've got a fucked leg," says Geoff Campbell over the phone from Box Hill skatepark in Melbourne. It's been 13 days since his most recent ACL surgery. He can walk around now, but filming lines is still a few weeks off.

Originally from New Zealand, Geoff is one of Australia's most prolific and celebrated skateboarding videographers. He honed his craft filming his friends in Melbourne, eventually becoming the TM for Nike SB Australia, and helping the campaigns of a handful of Australian SOTYs over recent years. Unfortunately for Geoff, he's been plagued by knee injuries since 2017, and just went under the knife for his third ACL reconstruction on the same knee. The silver lining is that Geoff remains a dedicated filmer with a great eye for detail and an unwavering creative drive. We caught up to chat about injuries, video projects and perfectionism.



In a reversal of their usual roles, Rowan Davis got behind the video camera to capture Geoff's impeccable form on this switch 360 flip.

Third surgery

My first ACL injury was in December 2017, and it has been my absolute nightmare since then. This time the surgeon put a graft down the outer edge of my knee which is meant to be a double reinforcement. Hopefully, I won't have this issue again. The first time I got surgery, I was in agony for a week. I was taking Endones every day and felt like a zombie. The recovery has been really mellow this time, and I haven't had any painkillers. I can straighten my leg but can't bend it too far yet. I'm hoping that this will be the last surgery.

Filming over skating

I was never under a delusion that I was going to be a pro skater. But with each injury, I've become more obsessive about filming and making videos because it's the next best outlet. When I was skating, there might have been a time when someone asked if I wanted to film a line for three hours and I'd say, "Nah, I'm trying to skate" [laughs]. Now I'm like, "sure". What else can I do?

It has contributed to my motivation because I live vicariously through other people's successes in skating. Filming a solid trick is a good day for me and I go home happy. But I would be filming regardless, even if I never had injuries.

Proudest productions

I'm proud of the box set of videos with *Seccy Presh*, *Cunnies Box*, *$21.50*, and *Duncan's @ Three*. I still enjoy watching them for the crew and the memories. The period captured in those videos felt like the golden years, when things were simpler. *Kitsch*, the Pass~Port video, was pretty cool, too. Then, when we were filming *Welcome To Melbourne*, I was passionate about trying to find new spots; all those skaters are amazing to film with. Squish's [Jack O'Grady] pro part was good, but projects like that require collaboration between a bunch of filmers. That's cool, but it's also nice to work on a project by myself and have all the control.

Favourite skaters to film

Callum [Paul], Kirksy [Jack Kirk] and Bryce [Golder]. From around 2008 to 2018, we would meet in the city and crawl around the same old streets. It still amazes me how much footage we bled out of those times. Those guys are so adaptable and could make a spot out of anything while just messing around. I think it comes out in the footage. It's spontaneous and fun to watch.

Rowan [Davis] is always great, and he's obviously got ridiculous talent. Tom [Snape] is amazing – everything he does has that authority and looks so dope. Also, Jack [O'Grady], Noah [Nayef], LC [Ben Lawrie], Riley [Pavey], Raph [Langslow], Nick [Boserio], Jason [Rainbird], Shaun [Paul], Sam [Wood], Digby [Luxton] et cetera. The overarching answer is really just my friends. If you watch my videos, the people in them are my favourite people to film with.

I've never been particularly fond of following around talent that I don't necessarily like hanging out with. I've avoided that for the most part. Most of my work in skating and filming has been with friends. That's important to me and where I think the best footage comes from.

Pavey's December drop

Dropping those two videos *Internet Birthday* and *Pleather Jacket* in December wasn't super calculated on my behalf or a plan I had. Towards the end of the year, I thought, *I better get these videos out because Riley had so much good footage and he deserved it to be seen. Internet Birthday* could have come out any time that year, but different factors held me up.

My biggest problem is that I'm always out filming, but I never stop and give myself time to make the videos. Even now, after surgery, I've barely had time to edit anything. Between catching up on work admin and filming long lens stuff, I have such a big pile of footage I need to edit and release.

That's how Riley's footage dropped at the last minute. It happened naturally from skating all the time and never getting around to doing the edits. In the end, I was like, "Shit, it's December. These videos need to come out." I put the time in and they're out.

Deadlines

I work pretty well under ruthless pressure. I get my videos done, but it's always down to the wire. At every premiere I've ever had, I'm sitting out the back of the venue, editing the video until one minute before you have to push play. The night before the Pass~Port video premiere, I stayed up all night. I don't enjoy that, but I've just learnt that it's the only way that I get it done. It's pretty horrible. Everyone's always excited for a premiere, and I'm preparing to have no sleep and be stressed until the last minute [laughs]. But it's nice when you push play and know that you've done everything you can to make it the best it can be.

Perfectionism

Whenever I'm working on a video, I have it in my head that it will be perfect. Like, "This one I'm going to be satisfied with." The second I finish it, I'm not satisfied and want to do another to *make it better.*

I like some of my videos, but in hindsight, I have certain problems with them all. I'm always torturing myself with these projects. I finish one and I think I'm going to relax and live a normal, healthy life for a minute. Then someone pipes up about some trick they want to do and it starts all over again. It's the thrill of the chase, or that process, that always keeps me motivated.

SAM FAIRWEATHER

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INTERNATIONAL ADVENTURES WITH ROME COLLYER

Words by Nat Kassel
Photo by Bryce Golder

Prior to this interview, Rome Collyer had a busy couple of weeks. He spent a week in Jakarta and Bali with the Vans APAC team, destroying demos and hitting rough street spots, then took an overnight flight to Sydney, where he linked up with the US Vans crew for the Make It Count trip. This was followed by more demos and street skating, along with a big weekend in Canberra for the infamous Belco Bowl Jam. Rome turned 17 mid-way through this succession of trips, which is surprising, because he carries himself with a maturity well beyond his years.

I met Rome on the flight to Jakarta, and although he's about 18 years younger than me, we got along great. Rome is as easygoing as can be, and his confidence shines through in his skateboarding. He shuts down demos, does well for himself in comps and when his next part comes out, people will get a real glimpse at his true potential. We caught up for a quick chat about life, skateboarding and what it's like to see so much of the world at such a young age.

Hey, Rome. What's your life looking like these days?

I'm currently living in Byron Bay, in Northern NSW. I moved up from Newcastle a couple of months back. I'm still doing homeschooling. This year I'm in year 11, but I haven't really started yet. I've also been travelling a fair bit.

Right, so how many countries have you travelled to at this point through skateboarding?

I've been to Italy, Thailand, Singapore, United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Indonesia so far. That's all been in the past nine months. My first trip overseas was in June 2022.

What have been some of the highlights of your travels so far?

The highlights have been seeing different places and cultures around the world that are so different to Australia. It's also been amazing meeting so many new people and making new friends.

Have you had some wild adventures?

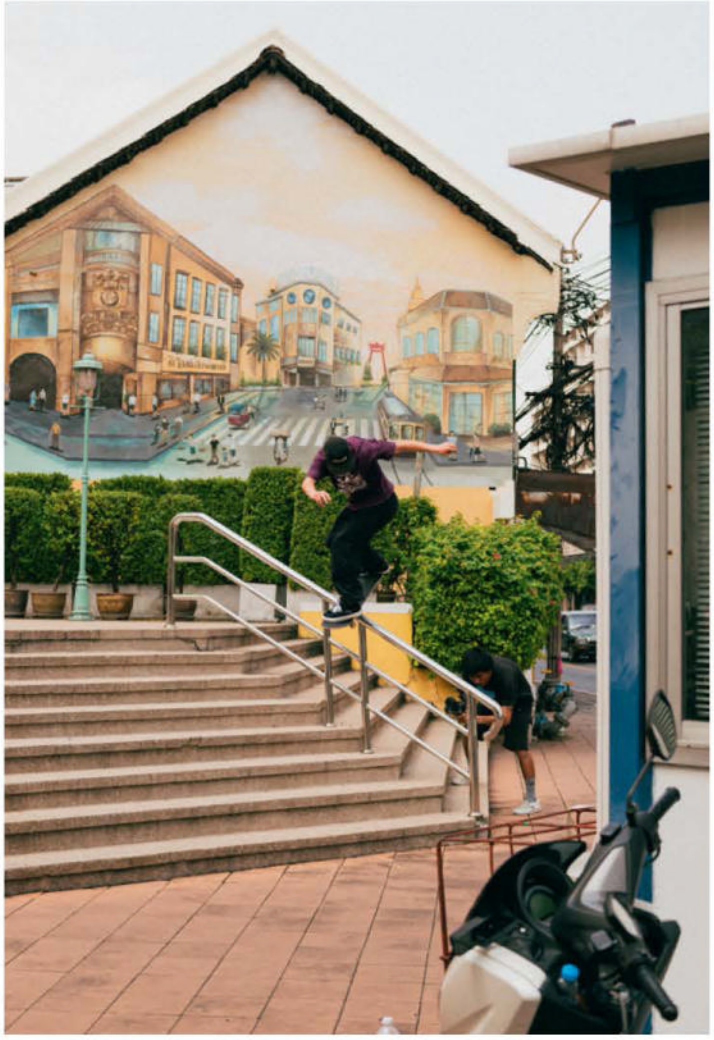
In Italy, one of our taxi drivers thought he was racing in Formula 1. He was driving me back to the airport, going 140 kilometres an hour in an 80 zone. I was just laughing in the back seat and filming him.

How was this last trip to Jakarta and Bali for you? Did you find it eye-opening? Were there any moments of culture shock?

It was a really fun trip. Bali was something else. The most memorable moments were the good food, good weather, fun surf and so many scooters ripping around on the narrow roads. Everyone was really nice, despite the language barrier. One pretty eye-opening experience was seeing how some people shower and wash their clothes alongside the rivers and waterways.

We went to two video premieres for *Lava*, in Jakarta and Bali, how was it being in a totally different country where you don't speak the language and seeing yourself on the big screen?

It didn't actually feel that different because when everyone was watching the video, we all understood what was happening and the tricks that were going down. It was a pretty cool experience being a part of that atmosphere in a foreign place, though. Both events were so much fun. Big thanks to the team and Vans APAC for taking us out there.


Rome busts a back lip on his recent trip to Bangkok.

How do you find it skating over there?

Bali has some very raw street spots [laughs]. They are some of the roughest spots I've ever skated. The traffic was sometimes a bit hard because of how populated it is over there and the weather was tropical at times.

Basral Graito is only 15 and you got on the back of his motorbike on the same day he'd had a crash. Were you shitting yourself?

Yes, I was definitely wondering whether or not I had made a good decision to ride on the bike with him after he had crashed into a car earlier that day. It was actually really fun though, and way more chill than I expected. He drove me from the bowl down in Uluwatu back to our hotel at Kuta, which is about an hour. We made it back safely.

Tell us about the other homies on the Vans APAC team. Who do you vibe with?

All the Vans APAC guys are so sick. There's Rubi [Rachman] from Indonesia, Daiki [Hoshino] from Japan and Eugene [Choi] from Korea, then the filmers, Mark [Khor] and Joy [Suryawan], just to name a few. I always have such a good time when I'm with that crew.

Now you're on the Make it Count trip with Vans. How's all that going?

It's been so much fun. Everyone is killing it. Kyle [Walker] got a heavy trick first try, which was so gnarly to see. Most nights of the trip, we have been hanging out and playing these games with challenges that we make up. The lads have been setting up obstacle courses, where you have to make your way to the end with your eyes closed. You can't touch or knock anything over to get to a beer, vape or some reward.

You don't drink, or smoke, right? What's your reward?

I try not to do any of that stuff. The challenges were too hard for me to even get to the reward, but I'd have a go just to have some fun.

How was the Belco weekend? How much money did you make and for what tricks?

Belco was so fun. I made $1040 in the cash for grabs street spot jams. I got best trick at the Independent flat bar with a back Smith and at the Surf Dive 'n' Ski kicker to rail with a back lip.

What's some of the craziest shit you saw go down over the weekend?

Lenard's [Tejada] kickflip down the double set was crazy. He made it look like a five stair. Steven Pineiro's front noseblunt was so sick over the channel in the bowl jam.

What's next on the itinerary? And what video parts have you got in the works?

I'm heading to New Zealand in April for a Volcom trip which should be sick. I've got a little bit of footage in Jon Fitzgerald's new video, which is coming out very soon. I want to put out my own part at some point this year, too.

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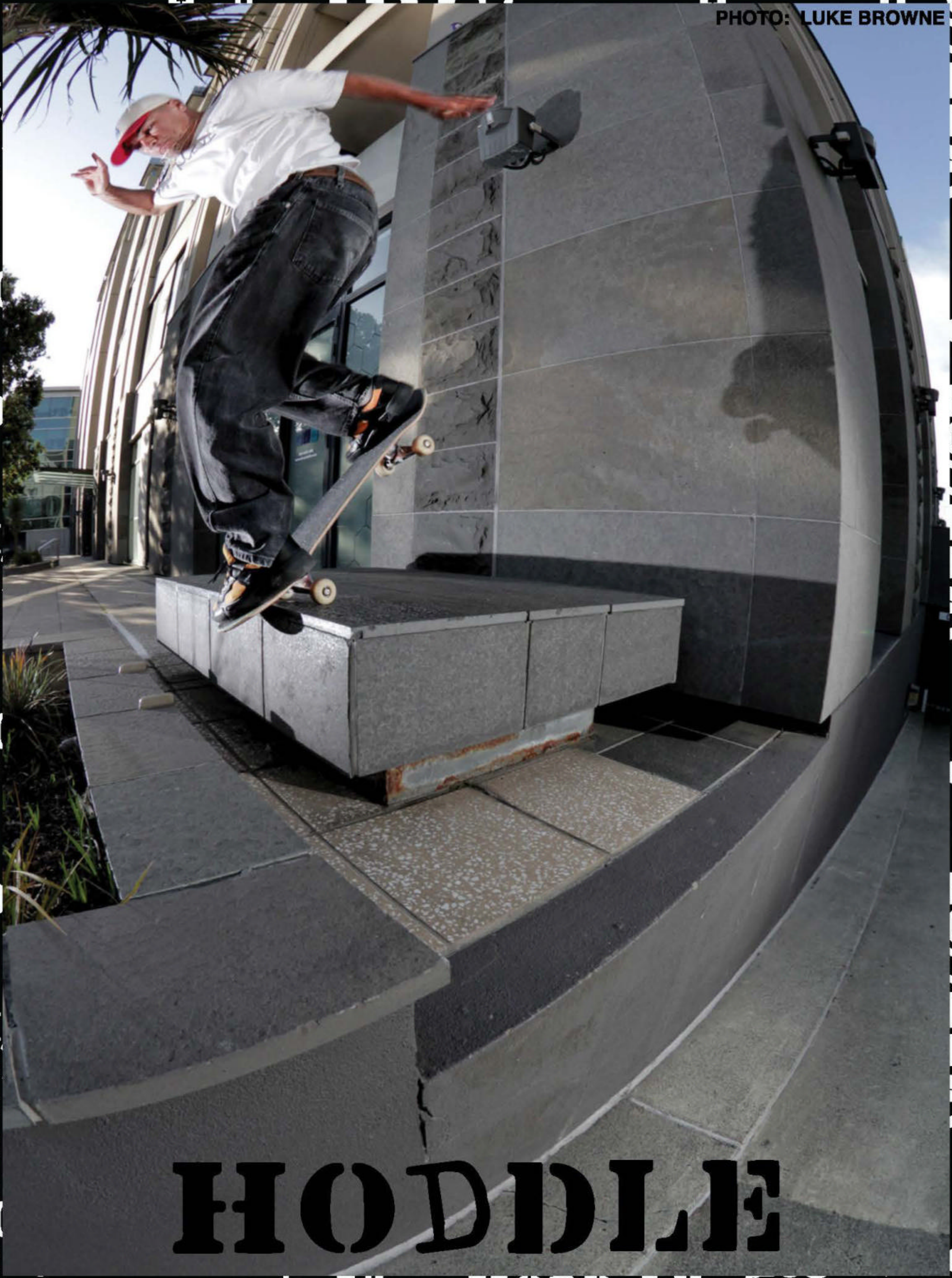

PHOTO: LUKE BROWNE

HODDLE

KARMA TSOCHEFF

"IT'S GOOD TO BE ALIVE"

Words by Trent Fahey
Photos by Darren Kirby

Karma Tsocheff is a skateboarder from Visalia, California, who went pro for Dogtown in 1990, then moved on to SMA, before clocking up decades with Consolidated. His third visit to Australia was in vast contrast to his previous times out here in the '90s. Back then, it was wild Big Day Out demos and long stints on the road for Kwala Distribution; while this time he was in holiday mode, catching some waves and casually ripping some Gold Coast skateparks. We caught up to chat about his past visits and recent vacation, during which he shared the waters of Burleigh with a burly bull shark. Now at 50 years of age, with three *Thrasher* covers under his belt and a classic collection of video parts, Karma is a skateboarding legend with many amazing tales to tell.

Escaping shark infested waters to float a frontside ollie out of the pool at Tugun.

What brought you to Australia, Karma?
I came out here with my girlfriend Samantha who's from this area. She lived in Burleigh Heads for a number of years. We came out here to visit her folks and have a bit of a holiday and escape the wintertime back home. We've been here for almost three months this time around.

You had a bit of an incident at Burleigh Point last week, right?
Last Friday at around noon, it was pretty flat but I went out surfing on my 7'6". I was the furthest person out, facing the beach and all of a sudden, I have this eerie suspicion and I look behind me. Five yards from me was a good-sized bull shark. It was swimming by me and I could see that it was every bit as big as I was. Its fin wasn't out of the water, it was submerged a little bit, but the water was real clear so I could see it as clear as day. I had to do a double take. I pulled my feet up out of the water and watched it swim by me and swim away. It wasn't coming towards me but I was out of there! I started paddling and rode a wave in. The only wave I caught was that one that I rode in to get away from that shark. The next day, I saw footage of 30 or 40 hammerheads swimming around at Burleigh Heads. Pretty wild stuff, dude. I'm glad that I saw the shark and didn't get eaten by it. It's good to be alive. Now I'm going to go listen to The Drones', "Shark Fin Blues".

Great song! How many times have you been to Australia?
This is my third time here. The last time was in maybe '98 with Alan Petersen, Howard Cooke and Scott Bourne. We came out and did a month-long tour and hit a bunch of parks. There's a bunch of footage from that trip somewhere – it was in one of the later Consolidated videos. That was a fun trip.

The time before, I came out in the summer of '93 and '94. We did a month-long tour with Kwala Distribution and then we did the Big Day Out tour. We got to go all down the East Coast, then Adelaide, Perth and even New Zealand. It was the year Soundgarden was headlining, plus The Breeders, The Ramones and Smashing Pumpkins. It was a real cool tour. They had a street course set up and we would go and skate that. In Sydney I did my first hit of acid and skated the demo, it was wild. Then we went and robbed all the rockstars' riders, brought all the beers out to the street course and handed them out to everybody who was watching us skate [laughs]. It was a pretty epic trip.

This time has been epic, too. I wanted to skate a bit more but I injured my ankle a week before coming out so I spent the first part of my trip swimming a lot and getting a little surfing in. Since I've been feeling better, I've been pushing around Varsity, Pizzey and Tugun. I was super stoked to skate that little bowl at Tugun.

You and Alan Petersen rode for Consolidated for more than two decades. What was it like seeing the company come to an end recently?
All good things must come to an end, I suppose. I think it ran its course. It was a great run. I felt we got strung along a little bit, like maybe we should have gotten out a few years earlier. We might have gotten a little more mileage out of skateboarding if we did; gotten a few more trips out of it and gotten a few more cool things, but we stuck it out with Consolidated. I had some offers here and there and in retrospect, I wish I would have taken them, but we love Consolidated and we were so dedicated to it. We had it inked on our skin. It was hard to leave.

But right now there are a couple of cool things going on – Steve Nesser from Familia Skateboards just did an inspo series board for me and I had my photo on a billboard in Minneapolis for a few months, believe it or not. And then Dogtown just reissued one of my early '90s pro models. Then I've been hearing little inklings of Santa Monica Airlines doing some reissues, so there are a few things happening in skateboarding. I love it. I still skate all the time. I'll never stop, it's in my blood.

Life after pro skateboarding can be a tough transition for many, but you moved into music. How did that come about?
Yeah, so in San Francisco, I played in a band called AM Magic for 13 years. We made three records, and I was always playing shows and recording with them. In 2007, I started working as a stagehand for other bands in San Francisco. Then in 2011, I relocated to Dayton, Ohio with my family to raise my boy, buy a home and settle down. I started doing stagehand work in Dayton and I eventually started doing live sound with one of the venues in town. That's actually where I met my girlfriend, Samantha. At the time, she was managing The Breeders and I was doing monitors for them one night. It's great – I've been there for about five years, doing live sound on stage. Sometimes I'll be running a followspot for Willie Nelson or Bob Dylan or Lynard Skynard, and then the next day I might be doing monitors for a new up-and-coming act. It's been a good learning experience and it's great to be around music. It's a lot of nights and weekends and long days, but it's been something that's kept me busy and I'm thankful for it.

Are you playing music these days?
Yeah, I was playing music with some guys back in Dayton before Covid. I play guitar and write songs. I'm supposed to get back together with the guys from AM Magic again soon and we were talking about going out to LA and putting some songs together. It's been 10 years since I've played with those guys so it's kind of exciting. I'm curious to see how it could come together.

To wrap things up, what are some of your highlights from this trip to Australia?
Surfing with sharks is definitely a highlight. Meeting Samantha's family and some of her friends has been great. Checking in at the men's circle [Mankind Project] with you was great. That was definitely a highlight. Pushing down the street here and hearing the ocean every night was a high point. And the kookaburras; I've collected so many kookaburra feathers, I love them. We were feeding lorikeets and one of them flapped me in the chest with its wing. That was a kick. I love it here, it's great. I hope to be back out here next summer. I would love to get an RV or a van and just go – get a surfboard and a skateboard and just cruise around Australia. ▲

Riley Pavey : Back Smith
Tamas Keefer

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OJ Wheels rider, Kieran Woolley gaps over to frontside wallride in Melbourne.
PHOTO: WADE MCLAUGHLIN

Riley Pavey

SLAM SKATER OF THE YEAR 2023

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RILEY PAVEY
RILEY PAVEY

WORDS BY NAT KASSEL

It seems like just yesterday that a little freckle-faced kid named Riley Pavey was coming into our office in his school uniform, racking bags of lollies from the neighbouring convenience store and asking us who had the next Slam cover. Riley was the grom full of questions who was always eager to skate, often scouring Google Maps for potential spots and trekking solo from the Gold Coast to Brisbane for weekend sessions. At 20, Riley is still young, but he has grown up a bit. He moved from the Gold Coast to Melbourne after he finished school and has spent the past year travelling internationally as a sponsored skateboarder. A true skate rat, he has progressed like crazy. Now Riley's constant motivation has culminated into the highest honour in Australian skateboarding: Slam Skater of the Year, 2023 – presented by Converse Cons.

PHOTO: BRYCE GOLDER

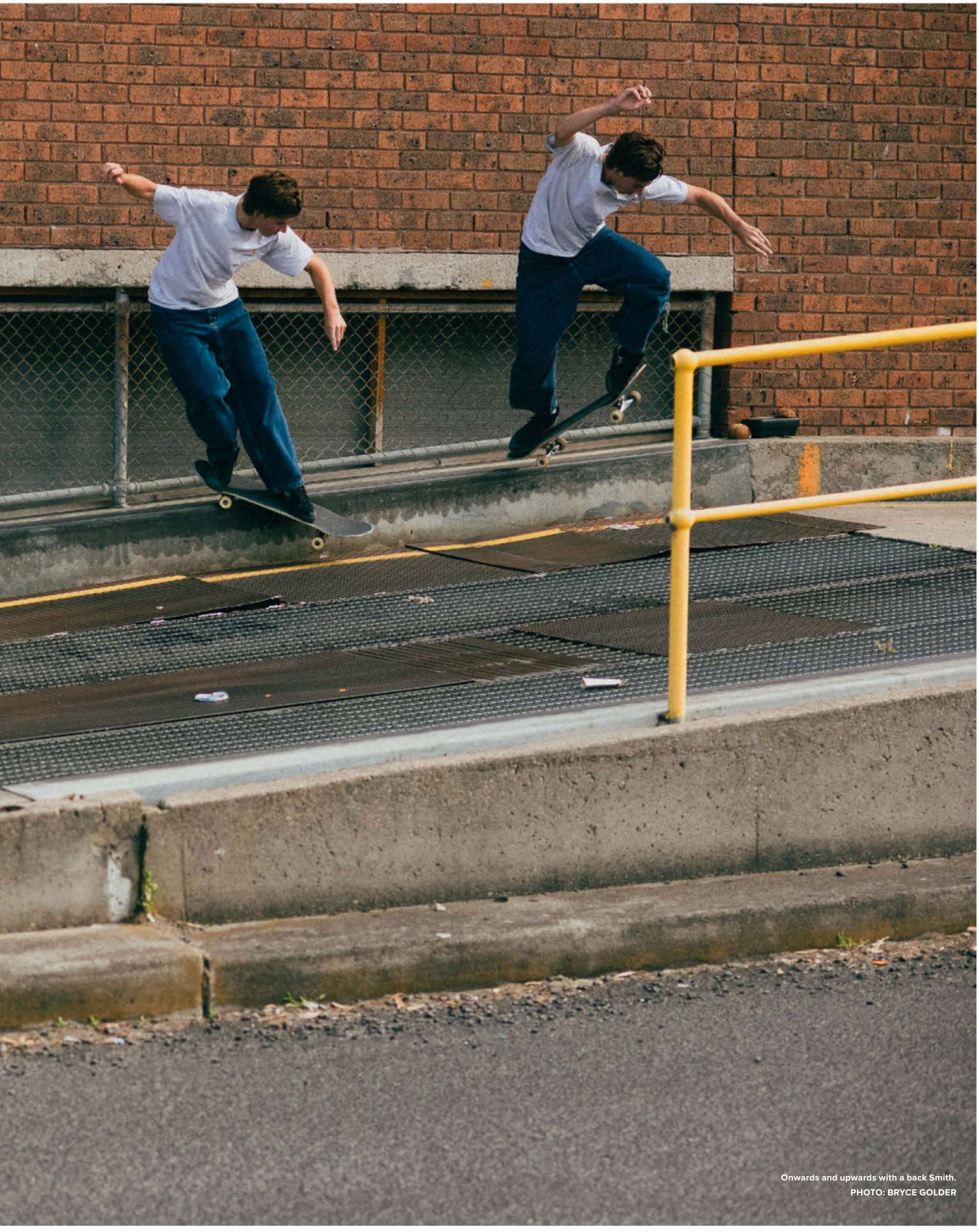
Riley Pavey

"I DIDN'T REALLY BELIEVE IT UNTIL A FEW DAYS AGO."

On the day of Riley's surprise, he'd planned to hit a skatepark a long way out of the city with a friend who'd just moved down to Melbourne from the Sunshine State, but with the skies looking rainy, he decided to stay in the city. Riley was sitting with his mates at No Piss Plaza in Carlton, minding his own business, when Slam's editor Trent Fahey approached wielding the golden SOTY cup. In the footage, you can hear Trent say, "There he is!" and the mix of surprise and joy on Riley's face is priceless.

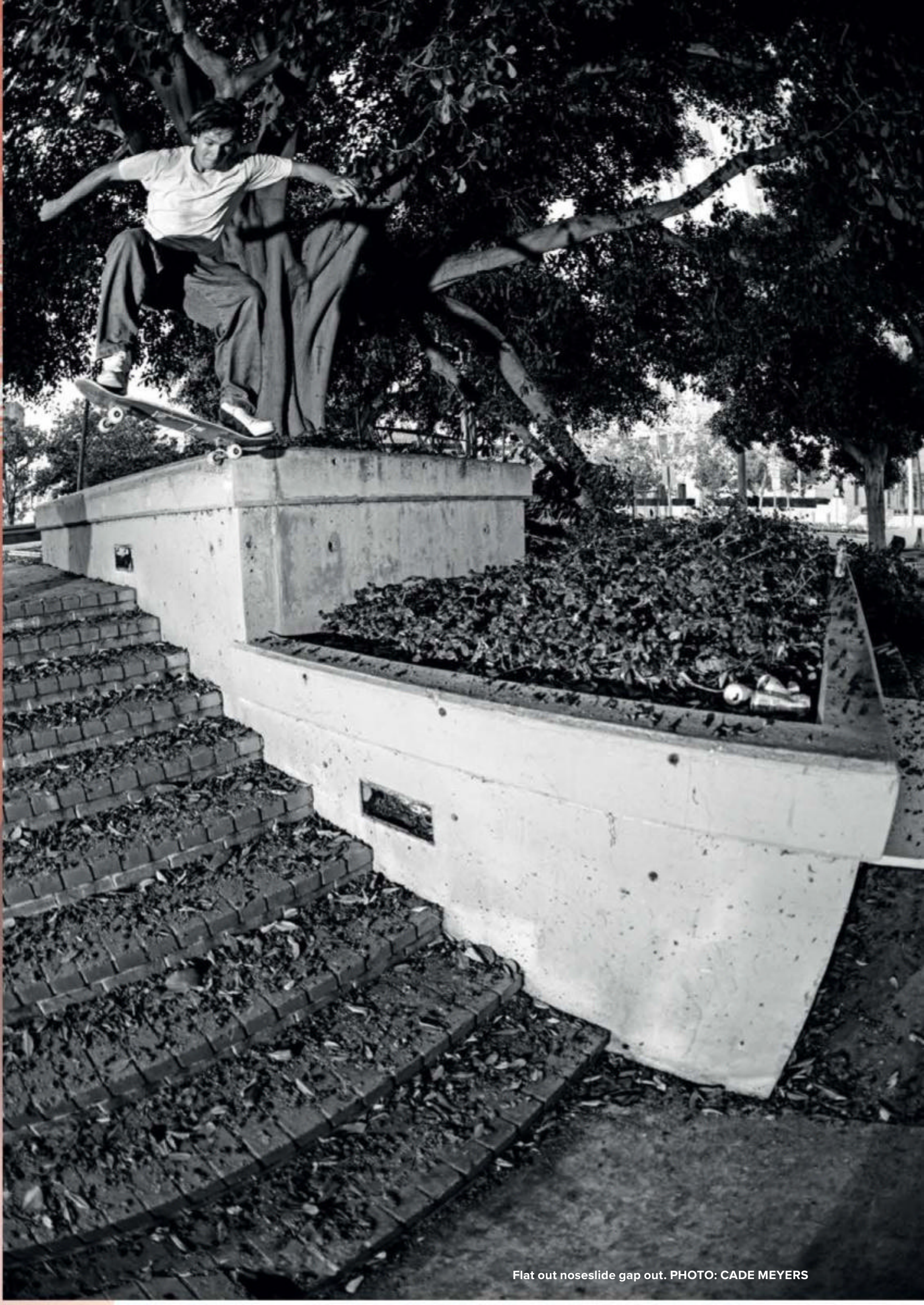
"I didn't see Trent come over to me. He was just in my face with the trophy. I was tripping," Riley laughed later. "I didn't really believe it until a few days ago."

Within seconds, bottles were popping and the cup was being filled with beer and bubbly. Let the record state that Riley did *not* take the Rowan Davis approach and stay sober enough to go out filming that night. "I'd say about 10 minutes after I got surprised, I was maggot," Riley laughed.



Onwards and upwards with a back Smith.
PHOTO: BRYCE GOLDER

> “THEY ESCORTED US OUT. WE TRIED TO BRIBE THEM WITH OUR GAMBLING MONEY, BUT THEY WEREN’T HAVING IT.”

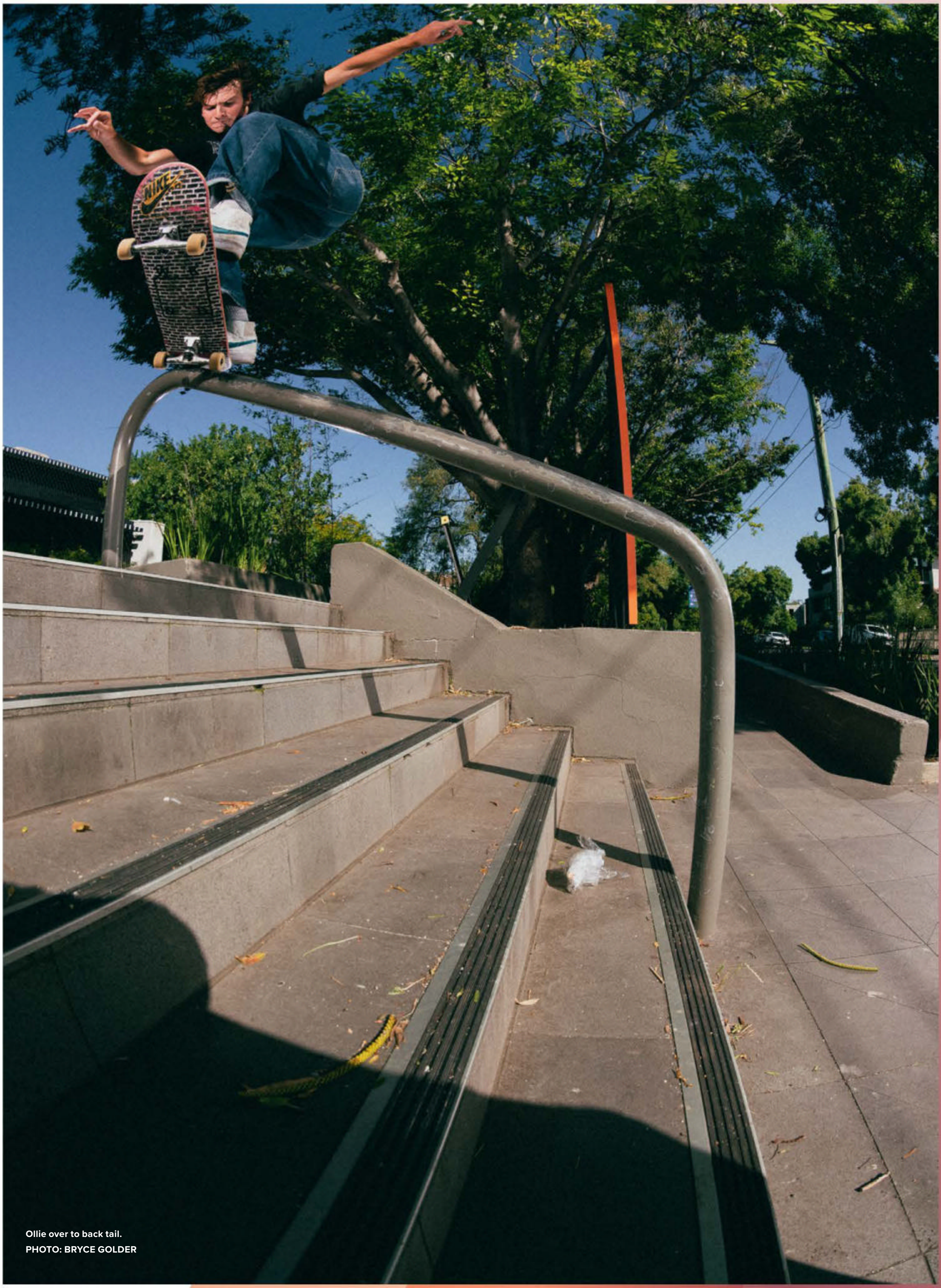


Flat out noseslide gap out. PHOTO: CADE MEYERS

The SOTY party kicked on at No Piss into the night, then at around 10pm, roughly a dozen cop cars rocked up out of nowhere to spoil everyone’s fun. The remaining crew legged it in all directions, and Riley ran through the Melbourne University campus, drunkenly playing hide and seek with the Victoria Police. In the kerfuffle, some of the crew headed home, and others reconnected at a pub nearby. Riley was too drunk to get into the pub, so he and Digby Luxton headed for the casino.

“I thought I’d have some good luck, but I was sorely mistaken,” Riley explains. “We just had a tiny little bit too much to drink and they escorted us out. We tried to bribe them with our gambling money, but they weren’t having it. We’d also just bought these fancy drinks and had one sip and they got taken off us, too.”

Riley woke up with a hell of a hangover. He looked down at a broken SOTY trophy on the floor of his room. “Yeah, the trophy got broken during the police chase,” Riley explains. “I was running, and I guess I tripped over and just threw it on the ground and it smashed. I was pretty gutted when I woke up and saw it on the floor in my room like that, but now I look at it, it reminds me of the story. I’m super hyped on it!”



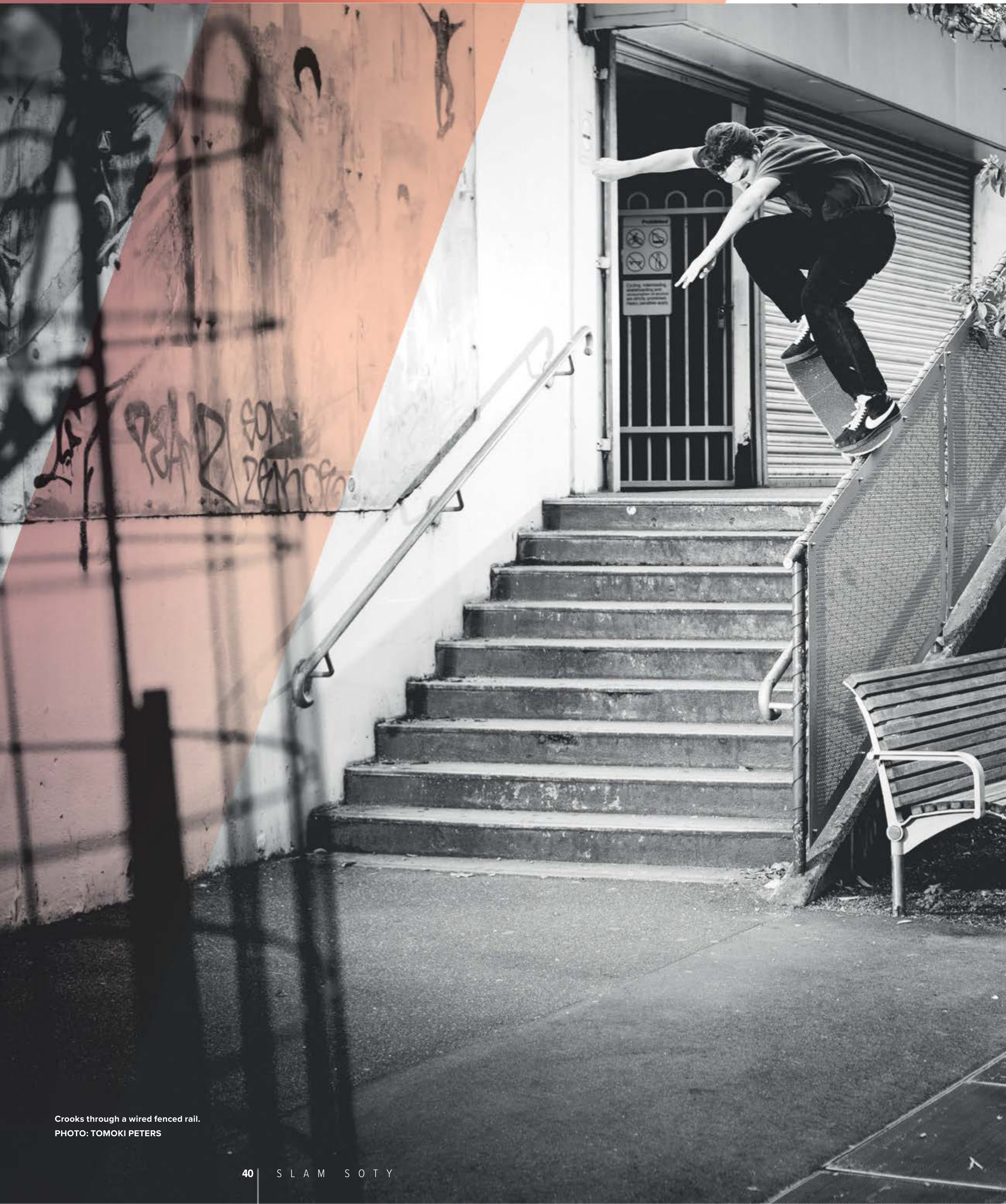
Ollie over to back tail.
PHOTO: BRYCE GOLDER

Gap to back five-o with a grassy roll away.
PHOTO: TOMOKI PETERS

“THE TROPHY GOT BROKEN DURING THE POLICE CHASE.”

It’s probably fair to say that Riley was not on everyone’s immediate radar as a SOTY contender throughout 2022. That’s largely because none of his footage came out until December. Those who skate with him regularly knew that he had been on an absolute tear, but for those outside the Melbourne scene, the first taste of footage didn’t emerge until December 8, when Geoff Campbell’s *Internet Birthday Episode 1* dropped online. Riley appears on screen in his Domino’s delivery driver uniform, copping cash from a random stranger after Smithing a kinked rail, and looking extremely casual on a SSBSTS. He closes out the video with a succession of heavy tricks, ending it with a loose gap to grind, gap out.

On December 30, *Pleather Jacket*, another Geoff Campbell production dropped. As with *Internet Birthday*, *Pleather Jacket* is more of a montage of loosely ordered parts. It makes for great viewing, but it’s not always easy to keep track of who has the most footage. Riley shows up in the opening line, has some tricks in the middle, and again, has the curtain closer section. His ender is a long frontside tailslide around a curved ledge, punctuated by a flawless kickflip out.



Crooks through a wired fenced rail.
PHOTO: TOMOKI PETERS

With the two parts dropping in December, you've got to wonder whether this was part of a strategic SOTY campaign by Riley, or if the timing of the release of these videos was more of a happy accident. Riley says it wasn't intentional, though Geoff Campbell has a slightly different answer to that question. [See page 22].

"Nah, it actually wasn't at all," says Riley. "*Internet Birthday* had been done for a while and we had been working on the Thunder vid. When *Internet Birthday* came out it seemed like a good time to drop *Pleather Jacket*."

Those who saw Riley's interview in Slam's previous issue will know that much of what he filmed this past year is yet to see the light of day. He travelled to Copenhagen for the CPH Pro, then caught up with the WKND team in Barcelona, and earned himself a spot on the flow team. After Europe, he found himself in The States for three months, filming more with WKND owner and TM Grant Yansura.

Riley's experience of California is the stuff that young skateboarders daydream about. Early on in the trip, Yansura invited him to a friendly baseball game with Heath Kirchart, Rowan Zorilla, Ben Kadow, Neck Face, Don Nguyen, Brian Hansen, Scuba Steve and a bunch of other skateboarding heavyweights. He got invites to skate at the Baker Boys park and the Primitive park. Between crashing with the WKND homies, he kicked it in a Hollywood serviced apartment, care of Carharrt. To top it all off, he got to cameo in one of Grant Yansura's infamous WKND skits, which was a big deal for someone who'd grown up watching those videos religiously. A preview of the skit came in the form of a hell of a welcome to WKND ad in our previous edition.

Apart from having a lot of fun living his childhood fantasies in the US, Riley also filmed the bulk of a WKND part, which is yet to be released. Riley says this video should be out around the time this magazine hits the shelves and a week after he won SOTY, Riley flew back to The States for a final filming push.

"Everyone in it has been smashing it, so I feel like I need to pull my weight a little more," says Riley. "Hopefully, I can get some more stuff for that before it comes out."

Noah Bardas

NEW GEN OF THE YEAR 2023

WORDS BY NAT KASSEL / PHOTOS BY WADE MCLAUGHLIN

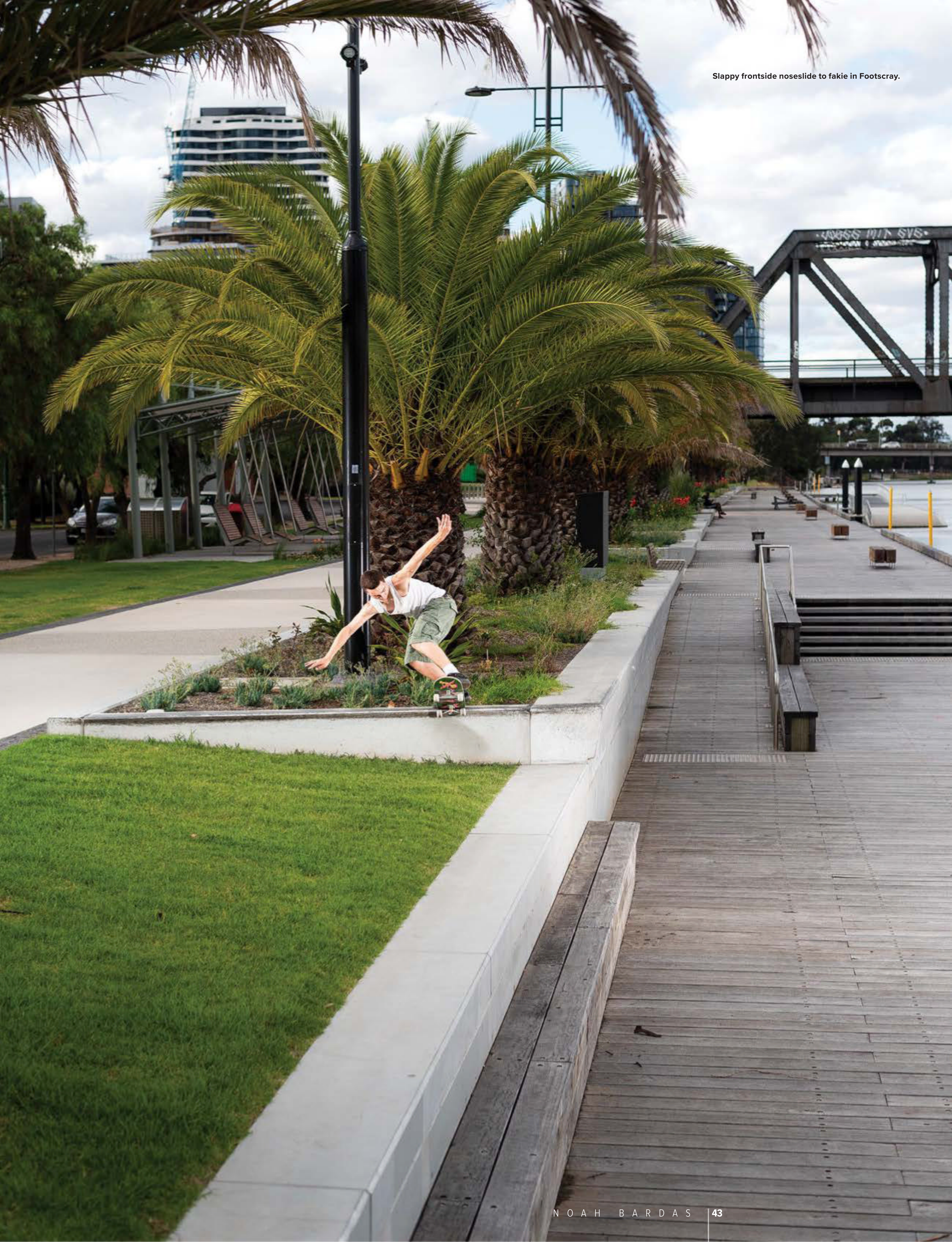
At just 15 years old, Noah Bardas is the youngest skateboarder in recent memory to take out New Gen of the Year, and he's a quintessential cheeky grom. In his New Gen interview, he explained that he prioritised skating over going to school, so his dad had sent him to a life skills camp that was "like juvie" – as in, jail for kids. On his first proper skate trip with Santa Cruz, Noah's teammates reported that during those long stints in the van, he killed time by burning peoples' arms with a jet lighter.

When we reached out to Noah about winning New Gen of the Year, he took a while to get back to us, eventually revealing that he'd seen the news while he was at school. "Nah," he said when asked whether he was expecting to win NGOTY. "I wanted Leaf [Kalem Dallimore Beange] or Georgie [Bidgood] to win it."

As a skateboarder, though, Noah seems well beyond his years, with great style and trick selection. He cut his teeth at St. Kilda skatepark before moving to Melbourne's inner city and making his transition to the streets, filming with Jeremy Corea and the Brick and Mortar crew. His footage and photos show he's taking inspiration from the right places. In 2022, Noah backed his New Gen with some solid tricks in Brick and Mortar's *Autumn*, then opened Santa Cruz's *Let's Trot* video with a heavy slam, followed by a redemptive 50-50 to insane hill bomb.

Perhaps the highest praise for Noah's talent came from his teammates on Santa Cruz. Sam Owbridge, the 28-year-old veteran of the youthful Australian team, said Noah was one of the standouts on their first trip: "Noah is so young and his style, trick selection and the stuff he did was next level. He's definitely going to do big things!" Taniah Meyers agreed, explaining, "I think the MVP of the trip would have to go to Noah. I hadn't skated with him too much and didn't realise how good he was, but he definitely shut it down at multiple spots."

Noah certainly had a big year, hitting some no-joke spots with the style and grace of a well-seasoned skateboarder. When asked what's next, Noah seemed to be taking it all in his stride: "Just skate, have fun and hopefully film some more stuff."▲



Slappy frontside noseslide to fakie in Footscray.

Back in 2021, when nobody was really sure how long the pandemic would hang around for, Noah Nayef had a Six Pix feature in this magazine. In the accompanying interview, Nayef revealed he was working on a new April part that would be out before the end of 2021. Of course, this deadline came and went, along with so many others during the pandemic, and skateboarders were left wondering when we might get to see the footage Nayef had been putting away. Nayef's April part wasn't released until November 30, 2022, but the voters agreed: not only was it worth the wait, it was the best Australian part of the year, earning Nayef Video Part of the Year for 2023.

Noah Nayef

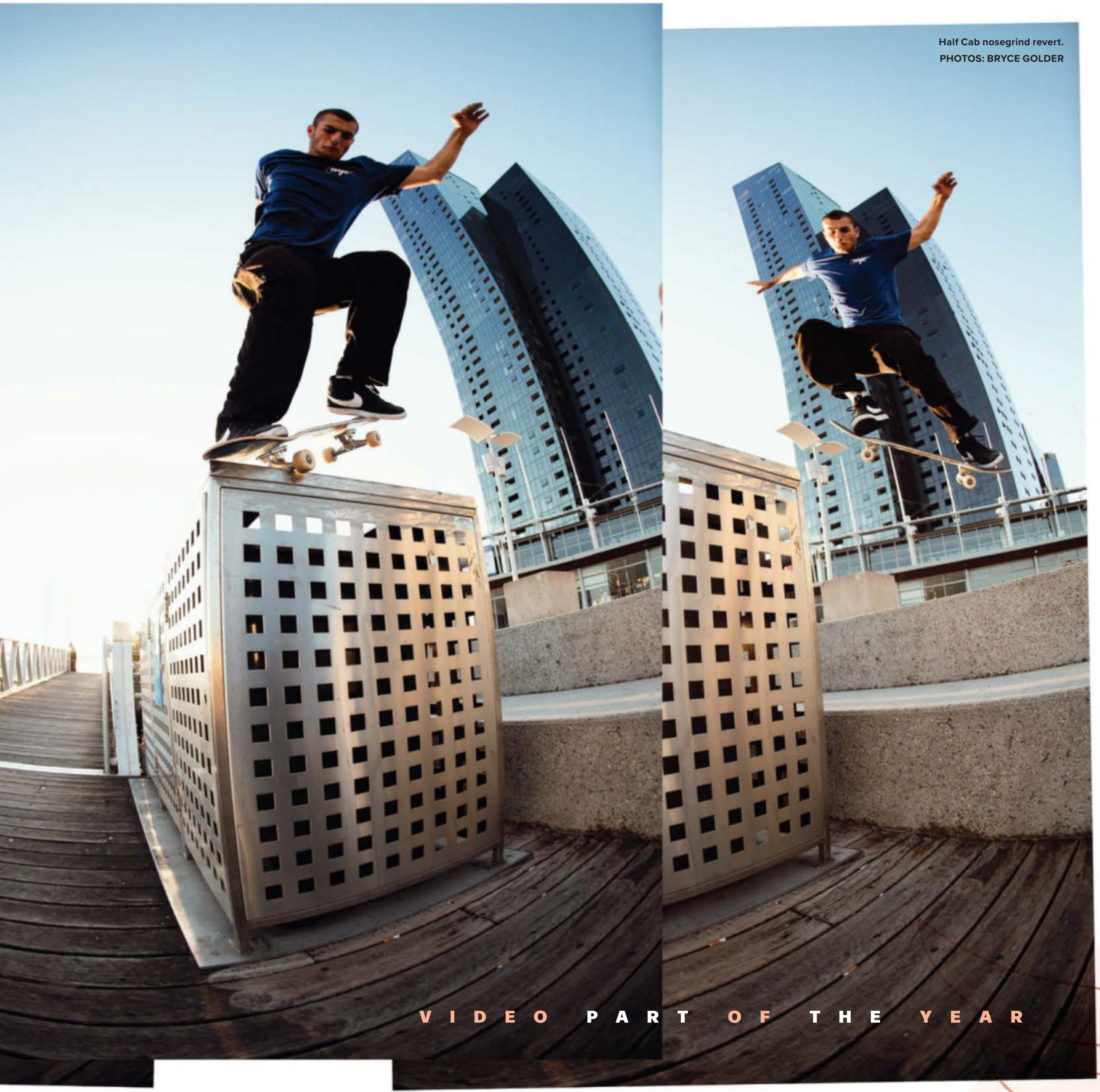
WORDS BY NAT KASSEL
PORTRAIT BY CHRIS MIDDLEBROOK

Nayef's part opens with a back lip down a rail in Malmo, Sweden. The photo, shot by Nils Svensson, had run in Slam a few months prior. In the footage, you get a real sense of the board control and sheer speed at which Nayef hits the rail. He crouches out on the landing, almost cess sliding a bit, then recovers for a high five with Jack O'Grady and big cheers from the crew.

The next four minutes showcase not only Nayef's raw talent and broad trick selection, but his unique style. The way he flicks out his feet on flip tricks – with both flair and effortlessness – is part of what makes his skateboarding so great to watch. He manages to shifty a high speed nollie heel in a line, then throws a wild looking varial flip over a big crusty gap to the road. His switch flip over the Hubba at Sydney's Town Hall is backfoot perfection.

But it's not just flip tricks; Nayef holds an impossibly long backside Smith grind all the way around a U-shaped ledge in Melbourne, and then manages to back 180 out.

In the footage, we see a group of overexcited primary school kids who may not know exactly what they're looking at, but they cheer him on with unbridled excitement. The part is cut to a mellow, dreamy hip hop track by Slim Guerilla, setting a nice pace and allowing the array of mind-altering tricks to breathe and be appreciated.



Half Cab nosegrind revert.
PHOTOS: BRYCE GOLDER

VIDEO PART OF THE YEAR

Unfortunately for Nayef, he spent a solid chunk of past year injured again and much of the footage in his April part was captured before 2022. However, he travelled to Europe for a few months, during which he skated hard, hit up various skate meccas, including the CPH Open, and went to his first concert – he snuck through a hole in the fence to see KISS with a heavy crew of skaters. Overall, Copenhagen was a highlight.

Notably, Nayef is *not* a former Australian SOTY, which is unheard of for a Video Part of the Year winner. Over the past decade, VPOTY been dominated by skaters like Chima Ferguson (*Nice To See You*, 2022), Dane Burman (*Hope To Die*, 2021) Jack O'Grady (*Kitsch*, 2020), Chima again (*Spinning Away*, 2019) and Jake Hayes (*Deathwish Part One*, 2018). Each of these established Australian legends won SOTY first, then went on to put out an internationally acclaimed part to win Video Part of the Year. But this year was different. Nayef is not a SOTY. Not yet, anyway.

For now, Nayef oozes style, natural talent and potential. If this part is anything to go by, he might just get his hands on the golden SOTY cup one day. In the meantime, Nayef's April part proves his calibre as one of the most exciting Australian skateboarders to watch right now. ▲

In 2000, a 16-year-old kid named Shane "Shazi" Azar had a Focus in Slam. The portrait showed a cheeky-looking lad in an Etnies hoody sitting in a wheelchair, comfortably leaning back into a wheelie. The skate photo is a "flat stick" 50-50 on an out-ledge at Manly, in Sydney's Northern Beaches. Azar already had a long list of sponsors at that point, but this was his introduction to the mag. Over the next decade, he would have an insane amount of coverage in Slam, and other mags, alongside a steady succession of heavy video parts. In Slam's very next issue, Azar can be seen "boosting" a frontside air in a very funny ad for Boost, the phone service company, alongside a classic photo of a bright blue Motorola phone with a black and white screen. A Volcom ad in the same issue shows him, still a tiny kid, launching a frontside 180 down a long stair set. Within a couple of years, Azar had visibly grown up, progressing to phenomenal levels. He has since held down a decades-long career as a well-respected skateboarder, TM and industry head. Now, it's an honour to announce that Shane Azar is the twelfth inductee into the Slam Hall of Fame.

Azar says he was at work when he heard that he'd made the Hall of Fame. "Two of the guys from work stormed my desk with congratulations," he explains. "I had no idea what they were on about. Total shock, followed by total stoke. It's mind-blowing to see my name up there with the heavy hitters. Not something I ever imagined or saw myself being on the level of."

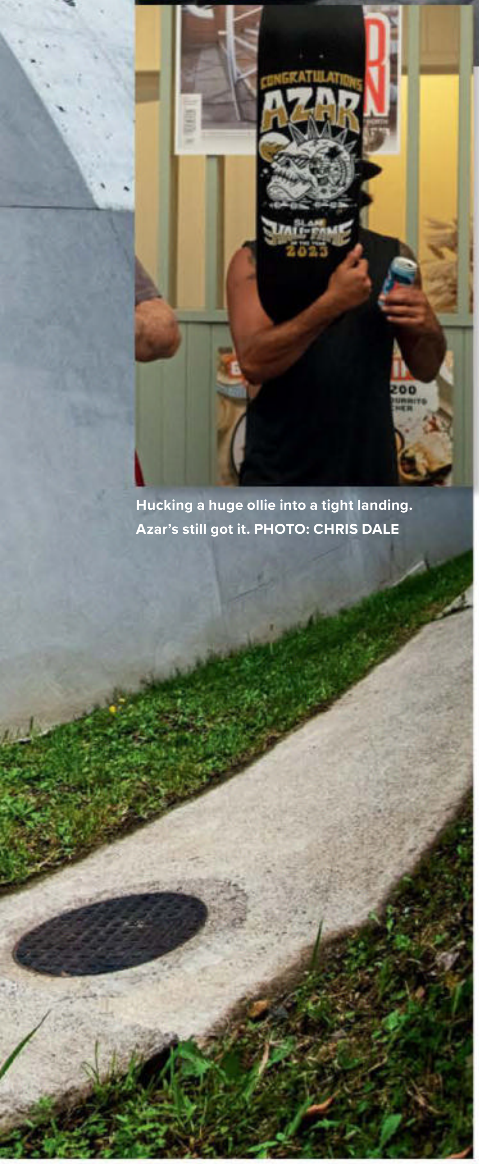
A few weeks later, a bunch of Azar's friends and family organised a big surprise party at Beach Burrito to celebrate the achievement. Azar nearly fainted when he walked in and saw the massive crew who were waiting to surprise him.

"I had no idea at all," he says. "It caught me so off guard, and the energy of all the crew was like a sonic boom to the body. The rush was so intense my legs went to jelly. It was wild! It turned into the biggest night I have had in years and years. Some old heads I haven't seen for a long time came to share the evening and we went full send. My boss – the legend – gave me the day off, and luckily so. My wife said there were still 20 bodies at the house when she left for work the next day. Unfortunately for her, she had to work... She went to sleep around 4am and powered through a huge day, not coming home until around 9pm. She's my Hall of Famer every year!"

Shane Azar

HALL OF FAME

WORDS BY NAT KASSEL
PORTRAITS BY ROMAN LIEBICH



Hucking a huge ollie into a tight landing. Azar's still got it. PHOTO: CHRIS DALE

Looking back through the archives of Azar's magazine and video coverage since 2000, it's obvious that he is well and truly "on the level". It's quite staggering how much he achieved over the next 20-odd years. He had parts in *PLAY*, the *Quick Flick* video series, *Deuce*, *Let's Live*, *REPLAY*, *Just Chill*, *Welcome to Theeve* and a *Fuknoath* part. He also had pro boards on XEN, two Slam covers, two *ASM* covers, along with countless interviews, tour features and ads along the way.

Issue 67, in 2003, was Azar's first Slam cover: a switch frontside boardslide down a handrail at Raymond Terrace in NSW. Azar would have been 19 or 20, but he still looks baby-faced in the photo, wearing a bright green shirt and jeans. That same year saw the release of XEN's *Deuce*, for which Dustin Dollin provides a ranting intro for Azar's part about the kid's potential. What follows is a brutal slam section cut to The Prodigy's "Smack My Bitch Up". Towards the end of the part, Azar does a series of switch tricks down handrails – a switch front board, a switch front tail and a switch 50-50 in succession. This was all hugely ground-breaking in 2003.

Azar has had all sorts of sponsors over the years, but Volcom has been a constant in his career. He's ridden for the company since he was a grom, and to this day, he works as the marketing director and TM of the skate, surf and snow teams. By all accounts, Volcom's full-length Australian video *Let's Live* marked a ripe moment in Australian skateboarding history and a memorable period in Azar's life. Featuring Shane Cross, Chima Ferguson, Jake Duncombe, Lewis Marnell, Dustin Dollin, Kieran Reilly, Chris Wood and Azar, along with a few others, it was an iconic video that helped cement Australian skateboarding onto the map. Four of those skaters would go on to win Australian SOTY, one became arguably the greatest Aboriginal skateboarder of all time, and now Azar is the second to join the Hall of Fame. For Azar, the video was a big achievement and the best of times.

"*Let's Live* is a stand out for sure," he reflects. "Being part of that film for Shane Cross, and having Lewis alongside us before he passed as well, that's the top. Those two left a huge hole in our community, and I still often think of our amazing experiences together."

On the subject of skateboarding highlights, Azar continues: "The early years with the XEN and the Northern Beaches [and] Quick Flicks crews are some of the best times. The *14 Munted Daze* trip to Europe will forever be the best trip of my skateboarding life. So many Aussies made it over that season, and we made the most of it. Memories for a lifetime off that one trip."

Azar is turning 40 this year and he's been happily married for nearly a decade. He has three kids and still skates Mona Vale skatepark weekly. He's genuinely stoked to be included in the Hall of Fame.

"Life is good," he says, before dishing some parting words of wisdom. "Enjoy the ride, be present, be kind to your friends, family and self. And make the most of your opportunities! That's the best any of us can do each day. Thank you, Slam and everyone who voted. I'm truly honoured to be part of this list."

A few days after the surprise party, Azar was still buzzing from the excitement of it all. "It means the world to me," he said. "People travelled from interstate, from the coast and the city. Faces I haven't seen in years but helped shape my skate career. Messages from older friends from the USA. It was immense. And I feel so grateful to have such amazing people in my life. It's overwhelming the amount of love I have felt. Skateboarding has given me lifelong friends. It's the greatest."▲

HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

2012	**Dustin Dollin**
2013	**Matt Mumford**
2014	**Andrew Currie**
2015	**Tas Pappas**
2016	**Anthony Mapstone**
2017	**Morgan Campbell**
2018	**Tim "Dorfus" McDougall**
2019	**Andrew Mapstone**
2020	**Chad Bartie**
2021	**Jake Brown**
2022	**Trent Riley**
2023	**Shane Azar**

TRIVIA
WITH
SEAN
RYAN

Sean Ryan is one of the best skateboarders in Australia. He has an absurd amount of pop, can basically do every trick, and is both a backside and a frontside guy. Hot off the heels of his last part in New Balance Numeric's 2021 video *Gazette*, Sean has spent the past year and a half filming for Cameron Fraser's upcoming masterpiece, *Arcadia*, set to be released extremely soon … so stay tuned.

Sean has had a few interviews come out in recent times, so instead of going for a traditional Q and A, we thought we might as well play a game of pub trivia. You can play along at home, too, if you please.

TRIVIA HOST: JOSH SABINI
PHOTOS AND CAPTIONS BY SAM COADY (EXCEPT WHERE NOTED)
PORTRAIT BY DAVE CHAMI

If you want to know a little about Sean before we get started, here you go: He is a regular footed skateboarder from Newcastle, who now lives in Sydney's Inner West. He skates for New Balance Numeric, Habitat, Ace Trucks, Pepper Grip, Church and 335 Skate Shop. He lost an eye in a surfing accident, so he sports a prosthetic eye behind his glasses. On top of all this, he is also a biomedical engineer. His job consists of making orthopaedic implants for amputees, which in layman's terms, is making the socket that goes over the stump of the limb to connect the prosthetic leg or arm to a person's body. Sean is a smart guy, so let's see how he fairs in a game of general knowledge trivia inspired by the pub game he enjoys so dearly.

Questions:
1. Which author wrote *Breakfast at Tiffany's* and *In Cold Blood*?
Sean: I simply can't guess.

2. Which famous author invented the words bandit, critic, dwindle, uncomfortable, and vomit?
Sean: Shakespeare.

3. What system do libraries use to classify books?
Sean: Alphabetical order.

4. What is arachnophobia?
Sean: Fear of spiders.

5. What does ET stand for?
Sean: That Canadian skater Etienne Gagne or extra-terrestrial.

6. What is Ag on the periodic table?
Sean: Silver.

7. Who is credited for creating the theory of biological evolution?
Sean: Charles Darwin.

8. Which of Newton's Laws states, "for every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction"?
Sean: Second law.

9. How many bones are there in the human body?
Sean: 206.

10. Which part of the body has the most bones?
Sean: Hand.

We searched far and wide for the perfect wheelchair ramp to go switch over. We never quite found it, but we did stumble across this one in North West Sydney – switch ollie.
PHOTO: SAM COADY

There's a reason why this ollie hasn't been done until Sean stepped up. It's on the corner of Redfern and Morehead Streets in Redfern. Go and take a look. PHOTO: SAM COADY

11. What Greek symbol is used for momentum?
Sean: Mu.

12. What mammal was poorly detonated on a beach in 1970?
Sean: Whale.

13. What do blue tongue lizards and giraffes have in common?
Sean: Both have blue tongues.

14. What is the only mammal that is capable of true flight?
Sean: Bat.

15. Which birds can fly backwards?
Sean: Hummingbirds.

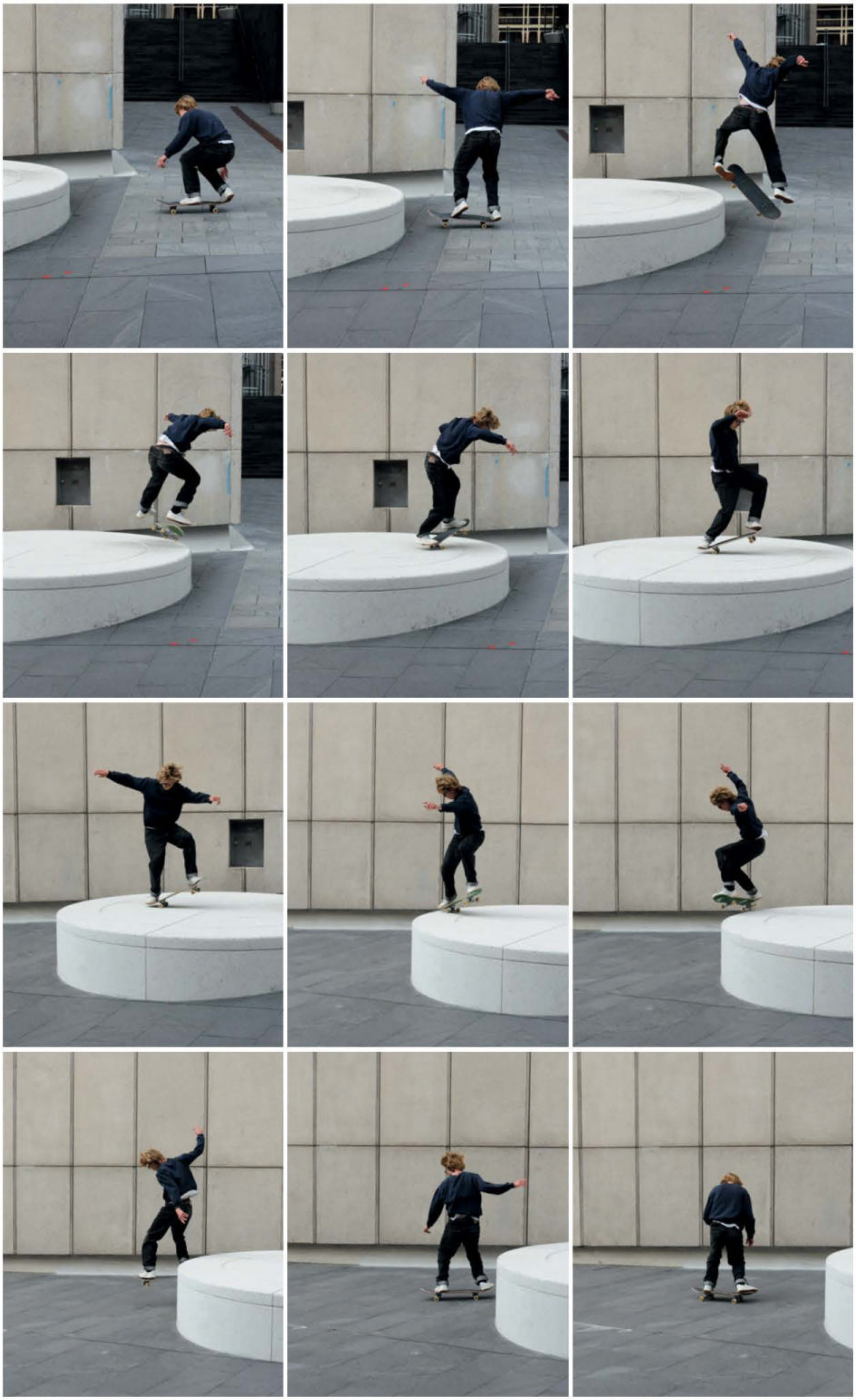
16. What is the name of the brothers who are responsible for the first aeroplane?
Sean: The Wright brothers.

17. Which famous artist designed the Chupa Chups logo?
Sean: Andy Warhol.

18. Arizona has a McDonald's where the arches are not golden. What colour are they?
Sean: Turquoise.

19. In the United States, one state is known for the twin cities. What state is it?
Sean: Washington.

20. Do you know what the two cities are?
Sean: No idea.



I think this pad only lasted a week before it was swiftly capped. This backside flip fakie manny revert may be the only trick that was captured on "The White Blob".
SEQUENCE: SAM COADY

21. What is the capital city of Mexico?
Sean: Mexico City.

22. What is Newcastle's nickname that originates from a prominent industry in the city?
Sean: The Steel City.

23. Architect Antoni Gaudi is most famous for his architecture in which European city?
Sean: Barcelona.

24. Which country did the Olympics originate in?
Sean: Greece.

25. How many time zones are there in China?
Sean: Three.

26. What city is home to the Hotel De Ville Plaza?
Sean: Bordeaux.

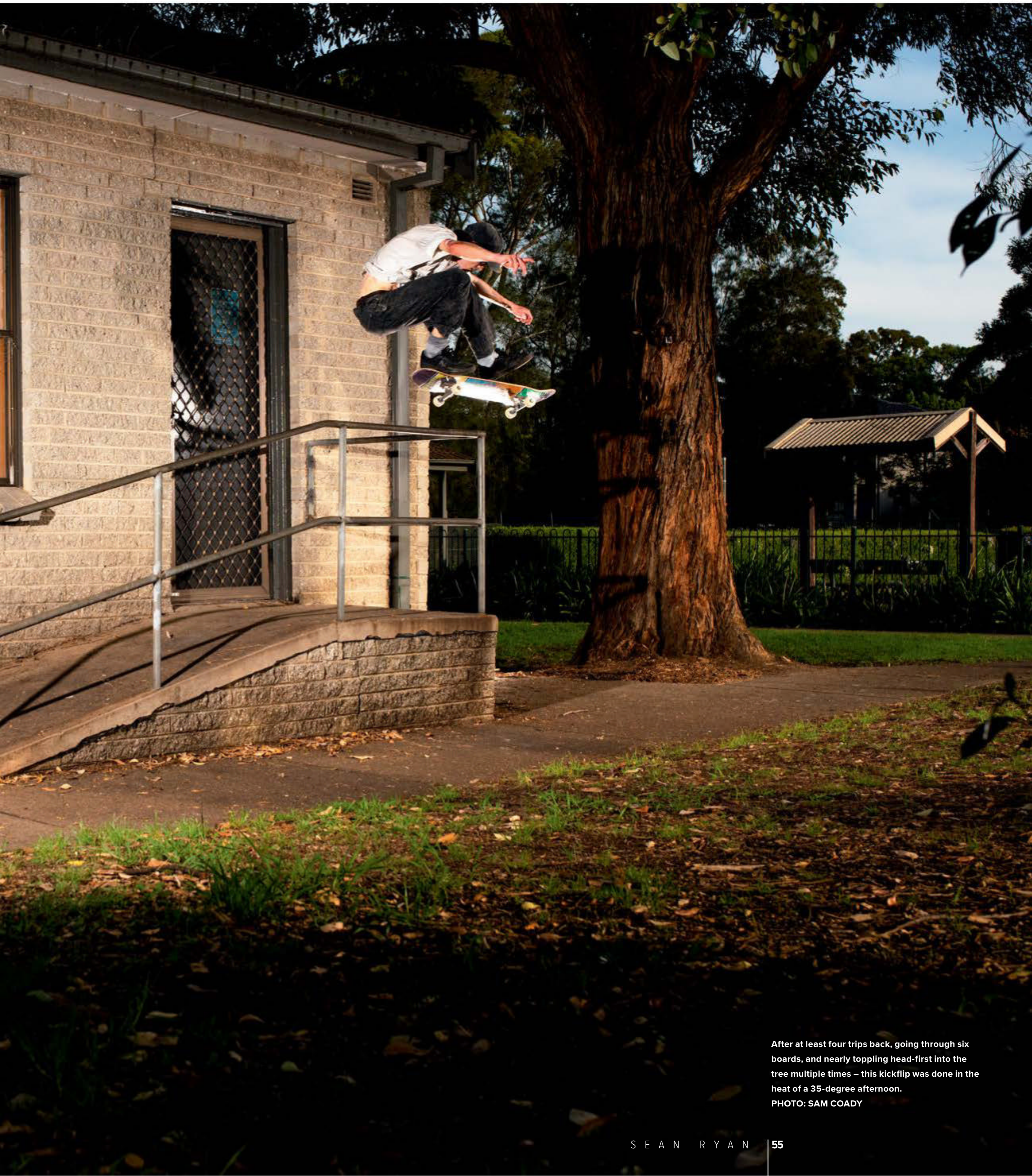
27. How many stairs is Melbourne's infamous Cheese 20?
Sean: Is it a 13?

28. What day was it when Jason Dill called Chris Carter in *Photosynthesis*?
Sean: Friday the fucking tenth.

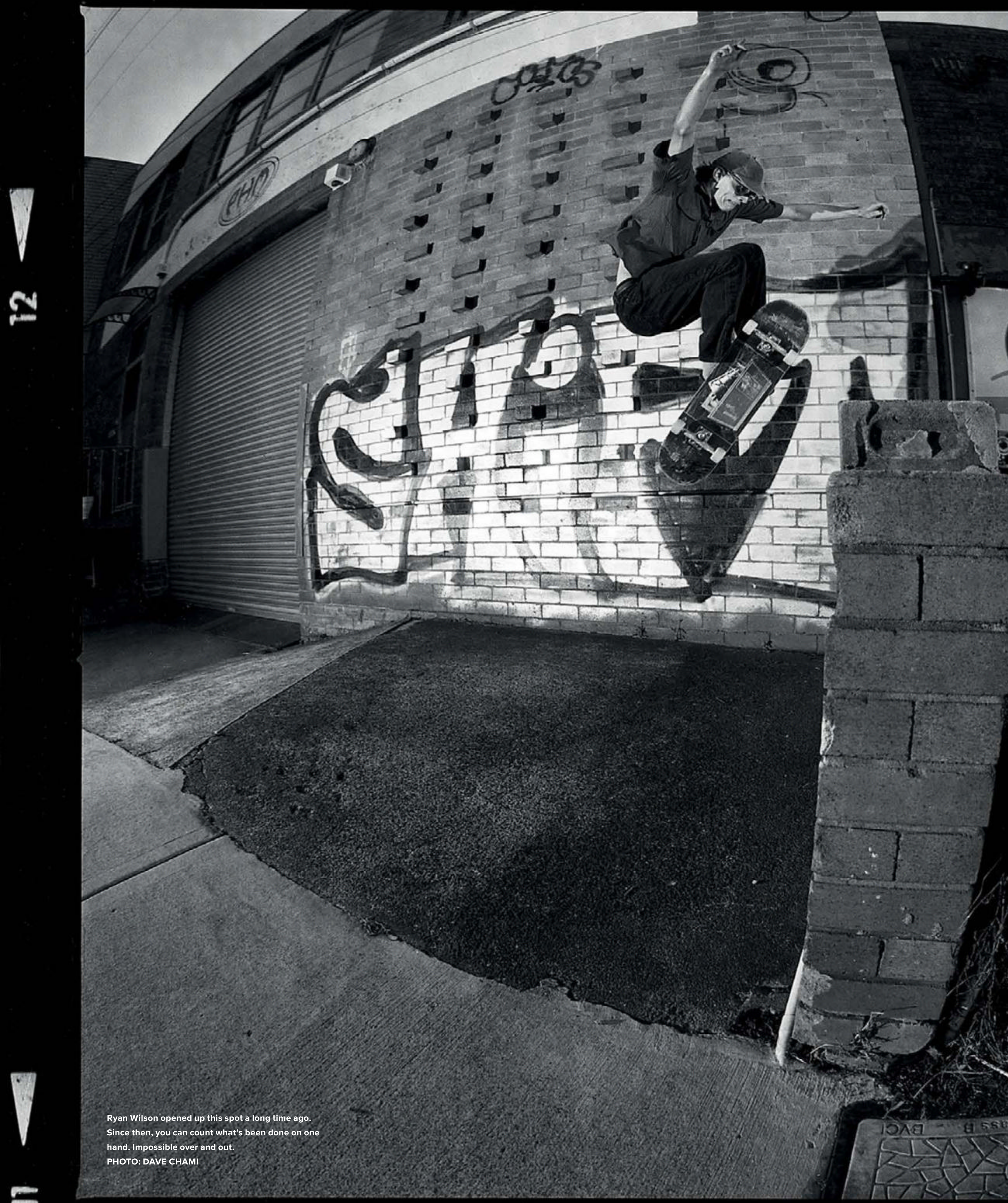
29. What do Nancy Cartwright, the voice of Bart Simpson, Kim Deal of The Breeders and Pixies, Quasi Skateboards and the Treaty of Bosnia and Herzegovina all have in common?
Sean: All from Dayton, Ohio.

30. What is the name of the first Alien Workshop video?
Sean: *Memory Screen*.

31. Who won the game of skate between you and Cameron [Fraser] on the weekend?
Sean: Cam did. I was on nothing, he was on T, and then I screwed up a switch tré, and he came back and did the best nollie front heel I've ever seen and won.



After at least four trips back, going through six boards, and nearly toppling head-first into the tree multiple times – this kickflip was done in the heat of a 35-degree afternoon.
PHOTO: SAM COADY



Ryan Wilson opened up this spot a long time ago. Since then, you can count what's been done on one hand. Impossible over and out.
PHOTO: DAVE CHAMI

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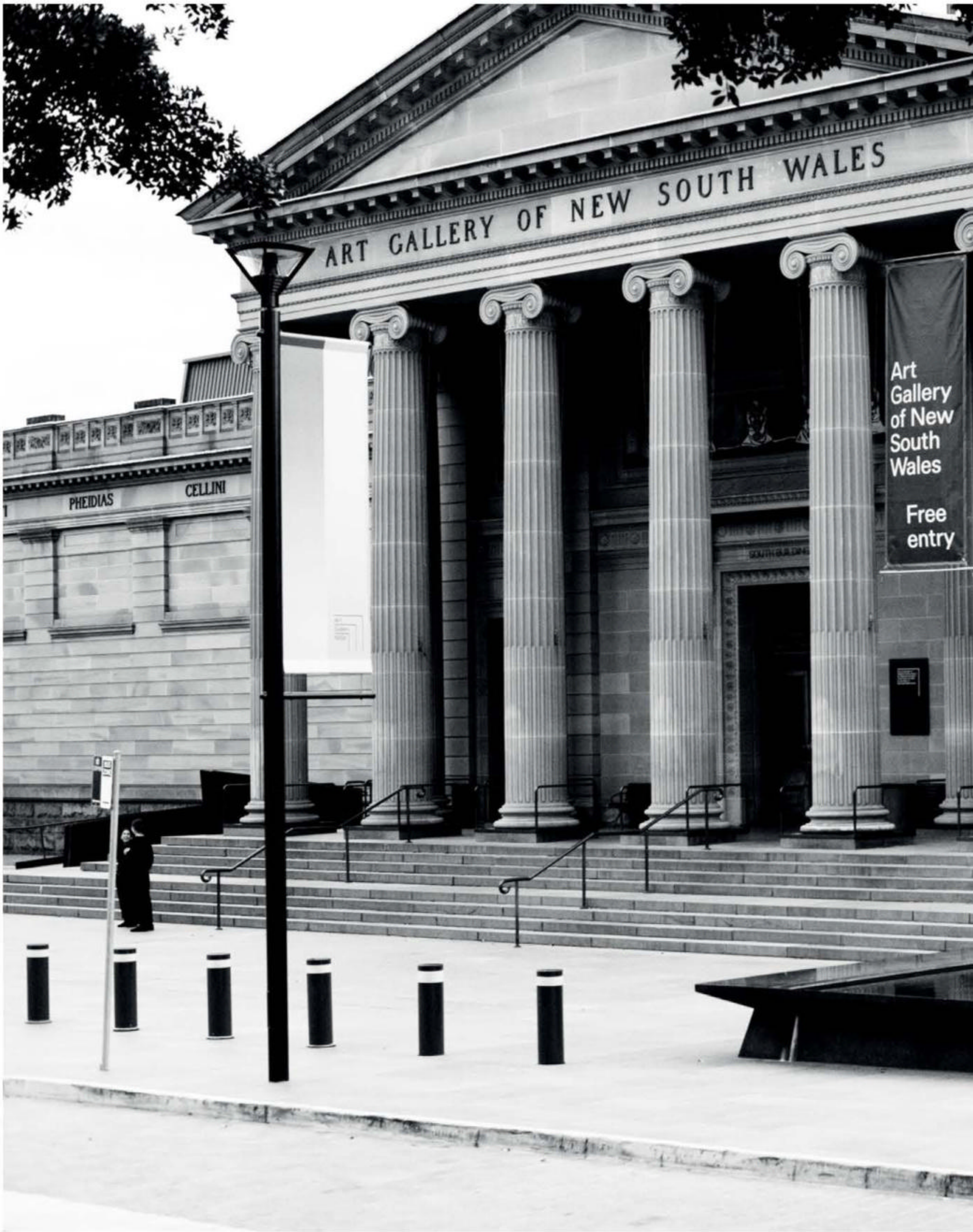
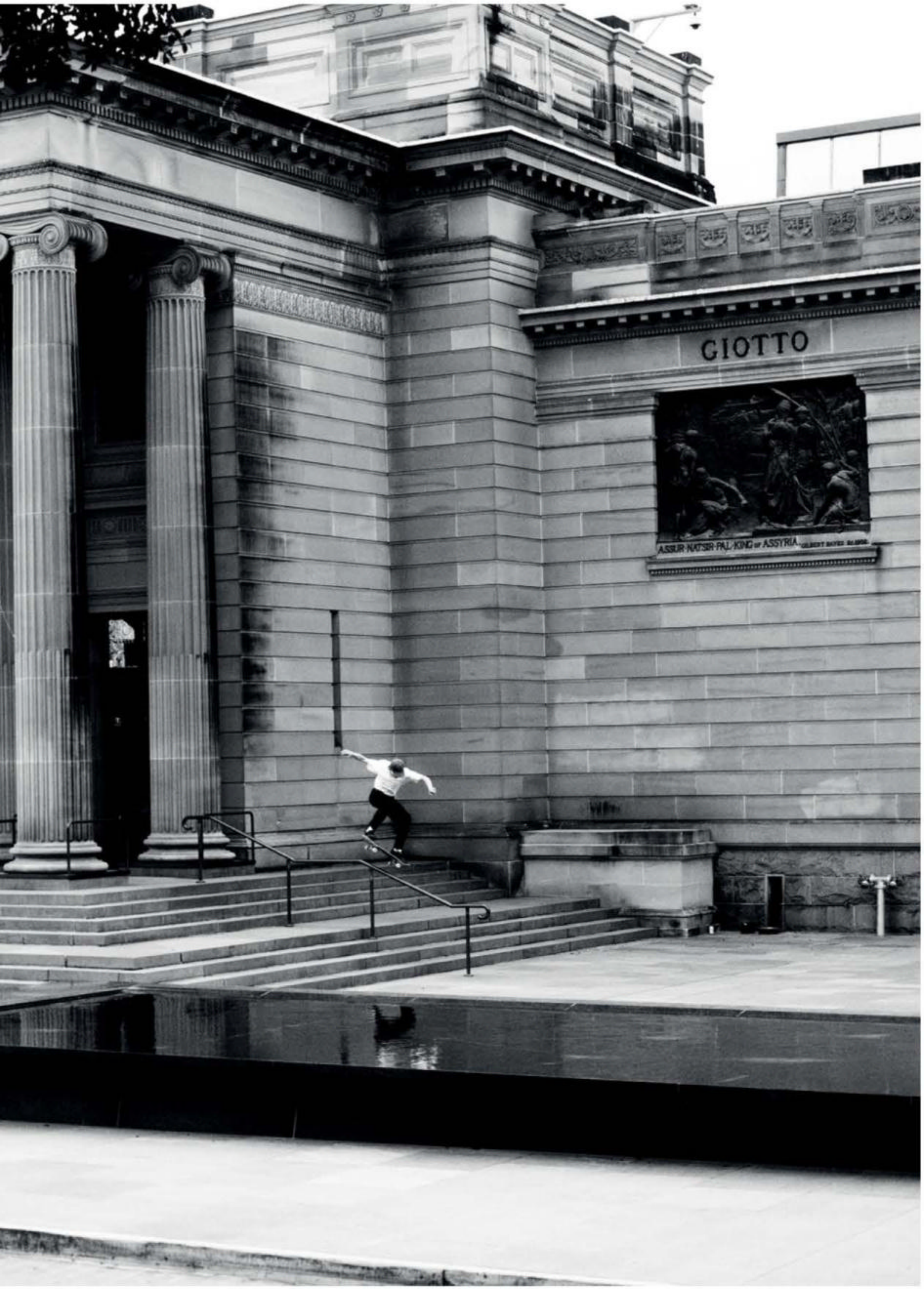
DRY CLE

Sean got 21 out of the 31 questions right. 67 per cent. A great effort. A credit. A definite pass. Congratulations, Sean, for sharing your general knowledge of trivia. A trivia king among the laymen.

TRIVIA
WITH
SEAN
RYAN

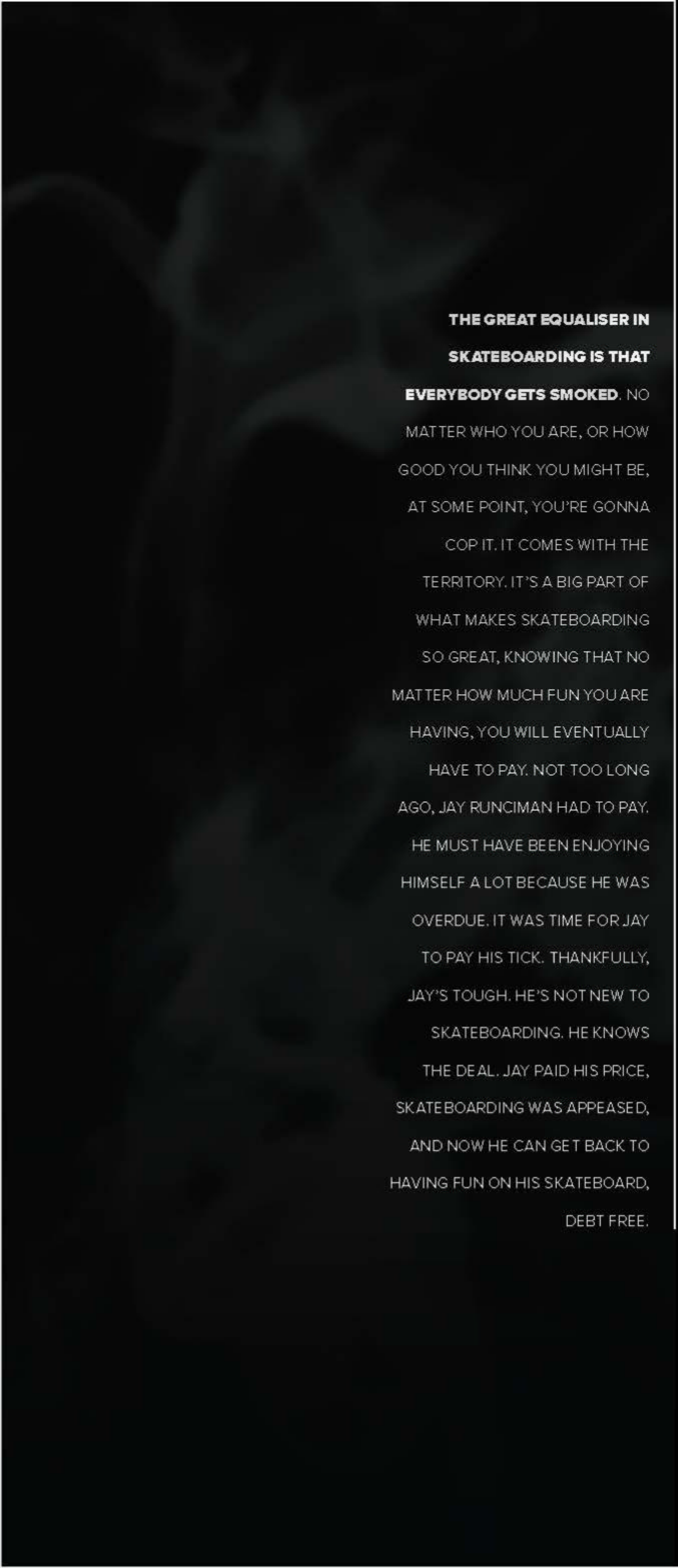
The Art Gallery of New South Wales is one of Sydney's most distinctive landmarks. It was built betwen 1883 and 1958, and in my opinion, it is one of the most intriguing buildings in the city. In turn, this makes shooting a photo here so special, especially when you only get a couple of goes at it – 7pm gap to lip.
PHOTO: SAM COADY


ART GALLERY OF NEW SOUTH WALES
PHEIDIAS
CELLINI
Art Gallery of New South Wales
Free entry

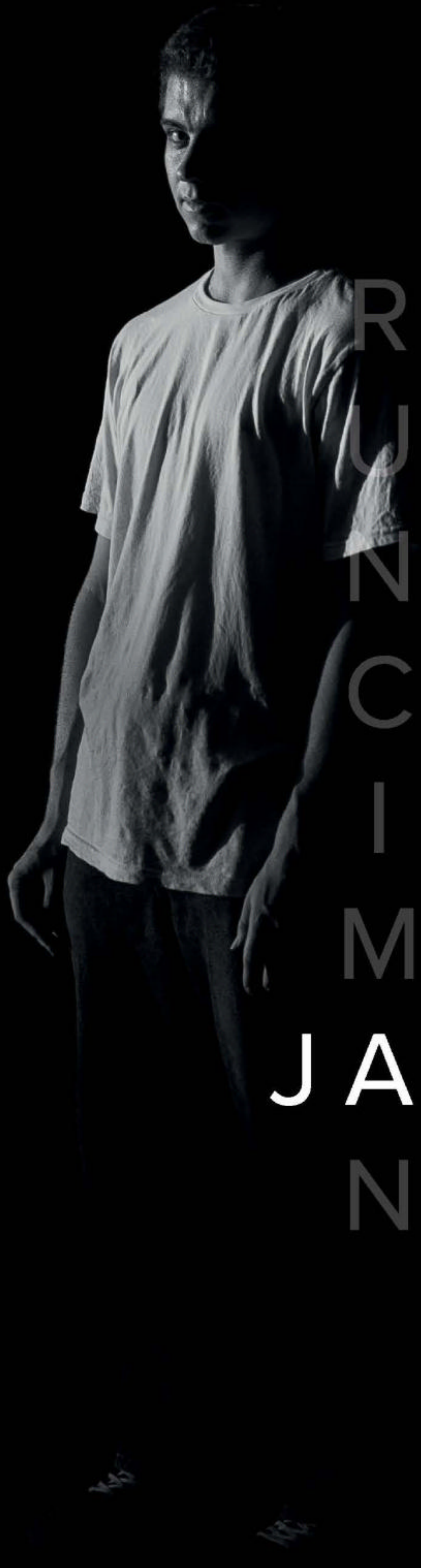


ANSWERS:

1. Truman Capote.
2. Shakespeare.
3. Dewey Decimal System.
4. Fear of spiders.
5. Extra-Terrestrial.
6. Silver.
7. Charles Darwin.
8. The third law of motion.
9. 206.
10. Hand (27).
11. p.
12. Whale.
13. Both have blue tongues.
14. Bats.
15. Hummingbirds.
16. The Wright Brothers.
17. Salvador Dali.
18. Turquoise.
19. Minnesota.
20. Minneapolis & St. Paul.
21. Mexico City.
22. The Steel City.
23. Barcelona.
24. Greece.
25. One.
26. Lyon.
27. Twelve.
28. Friday the fucking tenth.
29. All from Dayton, Ohio.
30. *Memory Screen.*
31. Cameron. ▲



THE GREAT EQUALISER IN SKATEBOARDING IS THAT EVERYBODY GETS SMOKED. NO MATTER WHO YOU ARE, OR HOW GOOD YOU THINK YOU MIGHT BE, AT SOME POINT, YOU'RE GONNA COP IT. IT COMES WITH THE TERRITORY. IT'S A BIG PART OF WHAT MAKES SKATEBOARDING SO GREAT, KNOWING THAT NO MATTER HOW MUCH FUN YOU ARE HAVING, YOU WILL EVENTUALLY HAVE TO PAY. NOT TOO LONG AGO, JAY RUNCIMAN HAD TO PAY. HE MUST HAVE BEEN ENJOYING HIMSELF A LOT BECAUSE HE WAS OVERDUE. IT WAS TIME FOR JAY TO PAY HIS TICK. THANKFULLY, JAY'S TOUGH. HE'S NOT NEW TO SKATEBOARDING. HE KNOWS THE DEAL. JAY PAID HIS PRICE, SKATEBOARDING WAS APPEASED, AND NOW HE CAN GET BACK TO HAVING FUN ON HIS SKATEBOARD, DEBT FREE.



JAY RUNCIMAN

PORTRAIT BY WADE MCLAUGHLIN

INTERVIEW BY JARROD KNOBLAUCH

Tell me about yesterday and the roll-in that you did off a roof. How did that go?
I had to go to the spot the night before and drill out some rivets holding the gutter at the bottom of the roll-in. I thought the gutter would come straight off, but two more bolts were holding it in. We were all there, trying to pull the whole gutter down, and then the cops rocked up at about 10 at night while we were trying to pull it off. The cops were completely fine with it somehow. They said, "Yeah, maybe don't go on the roof there." They were the most chill cops ever. It was hilarious.

Did you tell them you were planning on skating it?
We just said we were getting photos for Instagram and doing skate stuff. I think that's why they were chill with it. Anyway, I bought a clamp yesterday to try to clamp the gutter to the back of the bars on the side. At first, it wouldn't stick, and I was wigging out, but eventually, it stuck and it was all good. I landed it second shot but put my hand down and then I landed the third one fine, but Dad pressed record too late. How fucking hectic [laughs]. The clip starts and I'm already on the ground, rolling away.

Backside Smith grind, Melbourne.
PHOTO: WADE MCLAUGHLIN

Getting your dad to film clips is pretty fucking core [laughs].
Yeah, Dad hadn't been on a mission in a long time, so I said, "I'm rolling off a roof, come to this one." That was my vibe when I was a kid, so it made sense. Full circle.

Well, that's good. At least you know you can still roll off a roof.
Yeah, the roof cracked a little as well, so I was a bit scared that I would fall through it. It was Perspex, and I saw it crack on the third one as I climbed it.

What was underneath it?
Stairs and a spikey fence. Really safe [laughs].

I was trying to work out how long it's been since your last Slam interview, but I think it was a New Gen?
Yeah, it was a New Gen. I had a more recent interview in *Fuknoath* as well.

Right, and in the *Fuknoath* interview, the last thing you said was that everyone in Adelaide is "a pussy". How did that go down? [laughs] Is that still your opinion?
Not everyone. But not many people are skating. I'll be honest.

We just got the new City Park, so give us a rundown of the scene in Adelaide.
Yeah, groms are back out. But when the old City Park was gone it kind of killed the scene. Everyone would go and meet up at City Park on a Saturday and there would be a crew of 10 or 15 of us going out in the streets. That doesn't happen now. I reckon five is the most people I've had out with me on a session over the past three years. Trying to get people to leave the park is very hard in Adelaide. That's the problem. People skate but they don't skate street.

"DAD HADN'T BEEN ON A MISSION IN A LONG TIME, SO I SAID, 'I'M ROLLING OFF A ROOF, COME TO THIS ONE.'"

With Dad cam in on the action, Jay had to take the plunge a few times for this drop-in, Adelaide.
PHOTO: ANGUS FLAVEL

Yanking a front board out fakie, Melbourne.
PHOTO: WADE MCLAUGHLIN

They've got it too easy. What are your thoughts on the park?
It's pretty good. Some of it is a bit suss. The bowl's insane. The fun box is a bit undersized. The beginner section's a bit unnecessary, but it's good overall.

That point about not many people skating brings me to my next question – you seem to skate alone a lot.
I'm very specific about the spots I want to skate. Like, yesterday, I went to a roof and it's pretty hard to get people who are just trying to have a fun session to come to a roof [laughs]. But I love skating with people. It's way better. Whenever I go on trips, it's great. Being able to hit a rail with someone, compared to by yourself, is so much more chill. You see someone jump down a rail and not get hurt and you're like, "Oh, this is completely fine. What could possibly go wrong hitting this 12-rail?" [laughs].

"TURNS OUT I HAD SHATTERED ALL THREE BONES IN MY ARM. THERE WERE FLOATING BONES THROUGHOUT MY ELBOW."

I remember when you were younger, you would have to wait until the last spot of the day for the crew to come to your spot.
Yeah, from about 11 to 16, we would spend all morning at ledges and I wouldn't be able to skate them because they'd be above my knee height and I had no pop. Then I'd finally try to gee up and try a front Smith on a flat ledge and land on my shin. It would be fucked.

Then it was straight to the nine-stair for you to skate.
Exactly, straight to the nine-stair.

Back tail the Tea Tree Gully Hubba, Adelaide. PHOTO: JARROD KNOBLAUCH

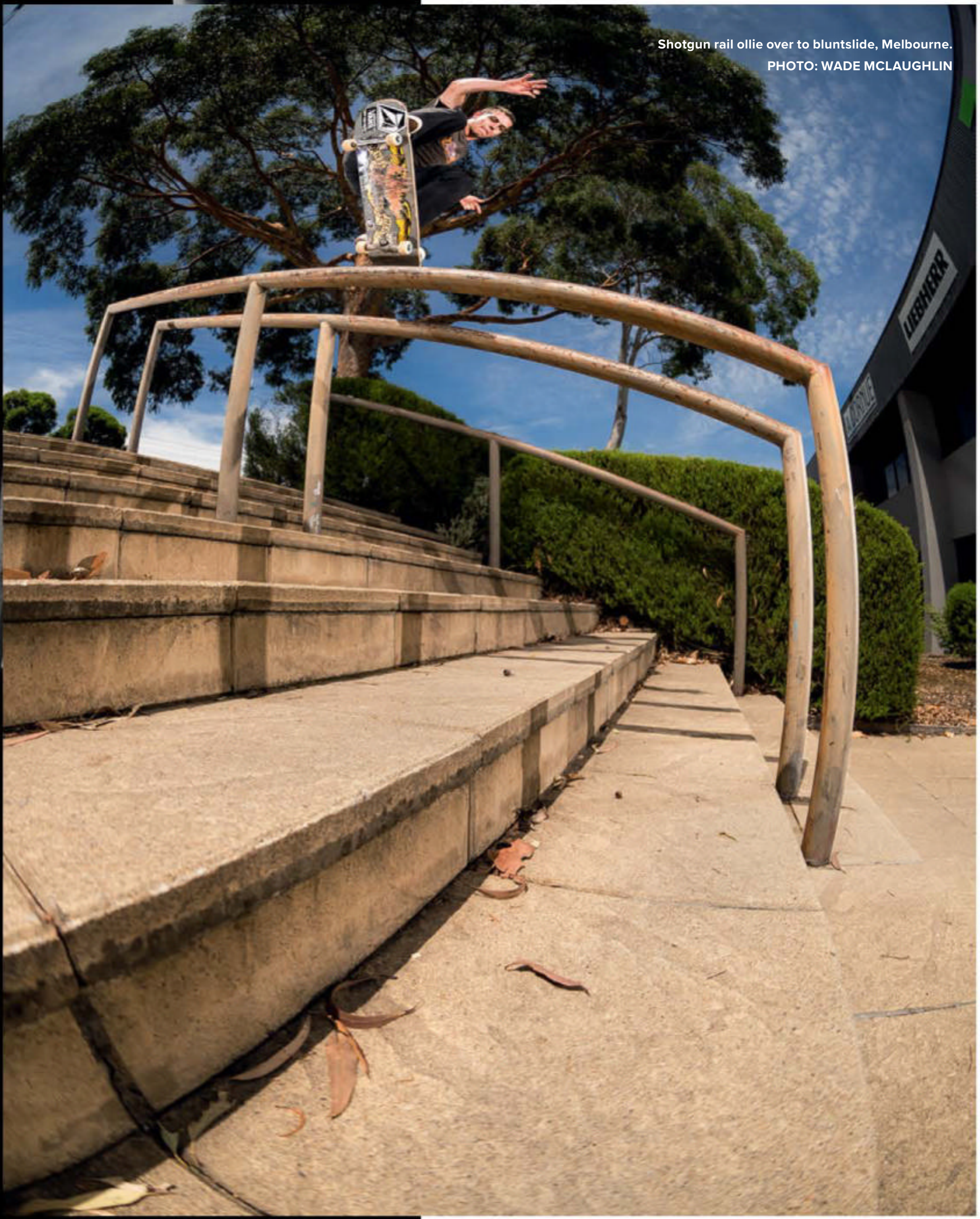
So, let's talk about the injury. You've gotten pretty smoked since your last interview.

Yeah, so we went to this rail and it's a nine-flat-two. I tried to back Smith it and some dude had come out of his house to kick us out. He half tried to step in my way as I went to go for the back Smith. I put my foot on the rail and ended up flipping backwards in the air, putting my arm all the way out. It dislocated and then went back in. It was right at the start of when Covid was fucked. I went to the hospital and pretty much got told that my elbow was fine. They said it was fractured but that it was going to heal by itself. I did rehab for six weeks, got back on the board and then slammed on flat on my elbow. It felt like it was broken again. I went and got X-rays and CT scans and all that stuff again. It turns out I had shattered all three bones in my arm. There were floating bones throughout my elbow. One of them was technically dislocated at the time and I didn't even know. After all these scans, the first surgeon I saw said it was one of the most horrific injuries he's ever seen and that he would not even try to do anything for it. He said that there was only one other surgeon who might try to operate. That was the surgeon who ended up doing the surgery. It's pretty good now. But the surgeon also said that he reckoned I'd broken it at least five years ago, so when I slammed on this rail, it would have already been broken.

Heavy. So, then you did some serious rehab on it?
Yeah, I reckon it was three months after the surgery that I was stretching, going to physio and doing Theraband stuff. I probably spent six months trying to work out and get it stronger. During that time, I was just skating ledges and flat ground, which I've never done before … ever [laughs].

Do you think the injury has changed the way you skate?
Yeah, 100 per cent. I like ledges now [laughs]. Because I could physically skate, but I couldn't fall from anything high or do anything dangerous, I found that I could zero-in on a couple of ledge tricks that would be able to match with bigger skating. I care more about big-scale skating. But I knew that if I slammed on a ledge onto my elbow, I'd only fall from knee-height off the ground. I spent a lot of time skating ledges, not many manuals and a bit of flat.

I guess this is your first bunch of footage that will be different from what people have seen from you in the past.
Yeah, definitely.



Shotgun rail ollie over to bluntslide, Melbourne.
PHOTO: WADE MCLAUGHLIN

Do you still want to skate rails?
Yeah, hell yeah. I'm back on them now. I won't say that I'm hyped I broke my elbow, but I would never have put time into ledges unless I had to. It's given me a bit of extra shit that I can do on the board now.

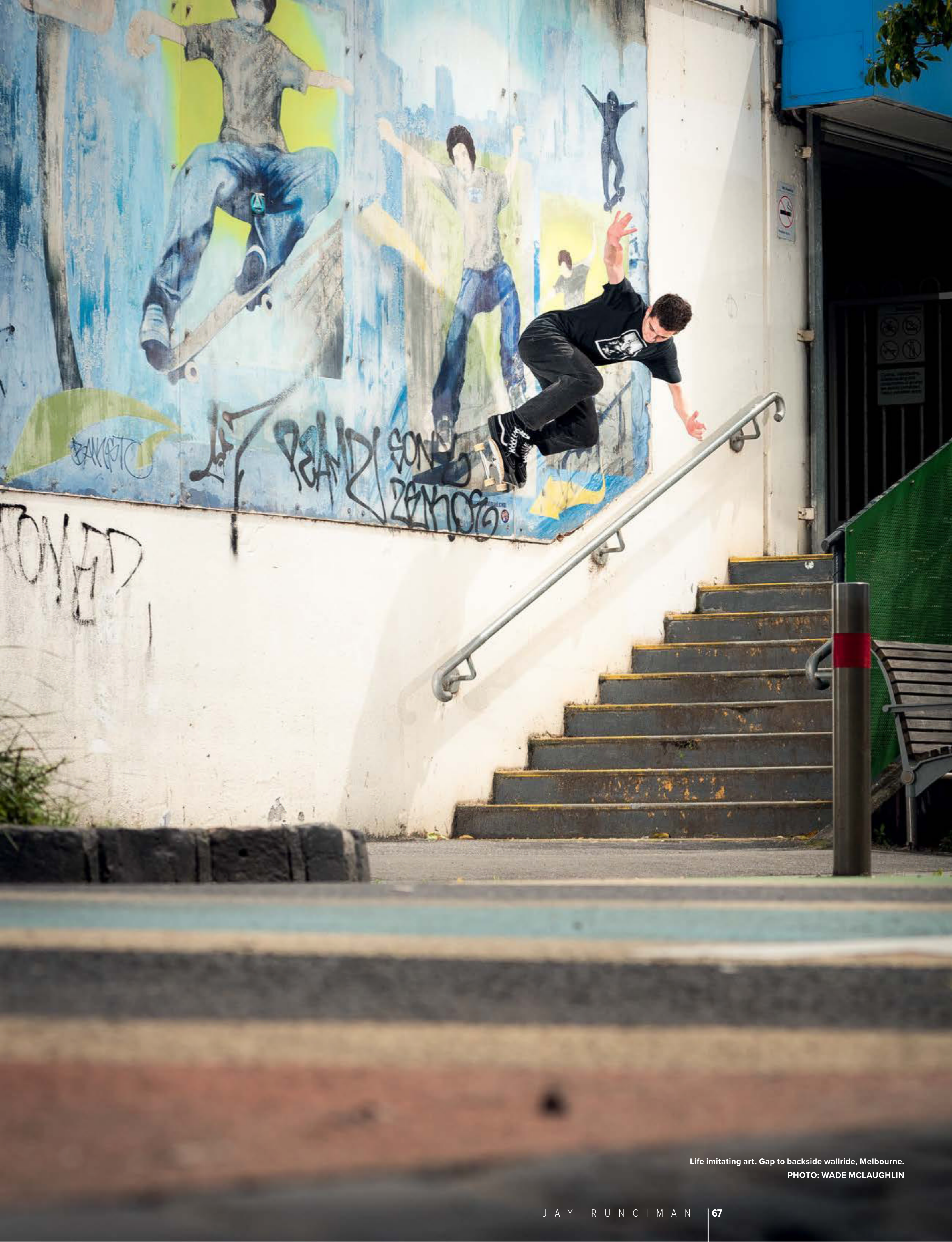
More well-rounded. If you're a bit more selective now, what makes a rail worth skating?
While my elbow was bad, I thought about what tricks should go in one part and what would match. I thought about trying to have a versatile part. So, I filmed all of the smaller ledge stuff for this part first. Anything I'm trying to do on a rail, I'm trying to make as different to my ledge tricks as possible. Say if I back Smith a ledge, I will try to avoid back Smithing a rail if they're going to be in the same part. I'm trying to keep it versatile.

You've travelled a bit more for your next part. I know you've been on the East Coast more often.
Yeah, I've been trying to get more footage in Sydney and Melbourne, specifically.

Do you think that holds more weight?
Yeah, I feel like people are always comparing you to other skaters. So when I do a trick in Adelaide at a spot no one's ever skated before, no one can compare it. People could perceive it as the sickest thing ever because no one's ever hit it, or they could think that rail's probably really easy to hit because no one's ever hit it. But then you do a trick in Melbourne at a spot where other people have already done tricks and it can mean more sometimes.

Right, so why don't you think more people travel to Adelaide?
I guess there's not that much going on here. It's a pretty quiet city. More people would come if more people saw the spots we've got here. But, for an American team to do a tour in Australia and get the brand name out there, going to Sydney and Melbourne makes more sense. People will see what you're doing, whereas Adelaide is quite small. It's riskier because I feel like no one really knows what's going on here.

"OH, THIS IS COMPLETELY FINE. WHAT COULD POSSIBLY GO WRONG HITTING THIS 12-RAIL?"



Life imitating art. Gap to backside wallride, Melbourne.
PHOTO: WADE MCLAUGHLIN

Sliding up a storm with a long boardslide to bank, Murrurundi.
PHOTO: MIKE O'MEALLY

“I CARE MORE ABOUT BIG-SCALE SKATING.”

How long have you been on Volcom? It seems like it’s been forever.
Yeah, Volcom’s the brand I’ve been on the longest, for sure. They’ve had my back forever. I’ve been on since I was 11 and I’m 23 now, so 12 years with the Stone.

What did you think of Azar getting into the Hall of Fame?
Yeah, it’s rad. He could have gotten it any time in the last little while. But I still want to see another part out of Azar.

Oh, you’re calling him out?
Nah, I’m not calling him out. I’m bigging him up. He’s got more in the tank, for sure. Azar will switch backside flip anything.

And how long’s it been since you haven’t had a board sponsor?
Since 2020, when I broke my elbow, I haven’t had a board sponsor.

What are you hyped on in skateboarding these days? What gets you juiced?
Seeing shit that’s never been done before. Whether it’s a new trick that’s being done on a spot that’s been hit before, or a new trick I’ve never seen altogether. Also, Grant Taylor. I’ll watch anything Antihero does.

What about the standard of comp skating now? It’s gotten pretty crazy.
Yeah, with Street League and The Olympics, you see someone doing a tré flip noseblunt bigspin. It’s like, good on you, that’s really hard and I can’t do it, but I don’t know if I’d necessarily want to do it. There’s a big difference between a hard trick and a trick looking good. Going back to Grant Taylor, he can do frontside grabs all day and all of them will be different and just as sick for different reasons. I’d way rather watch that.

All right, if you’re happy with that, I’m happy. Hopefully, we don’t sound too cooked.
I’m happy.

JAY RUNCIMAN

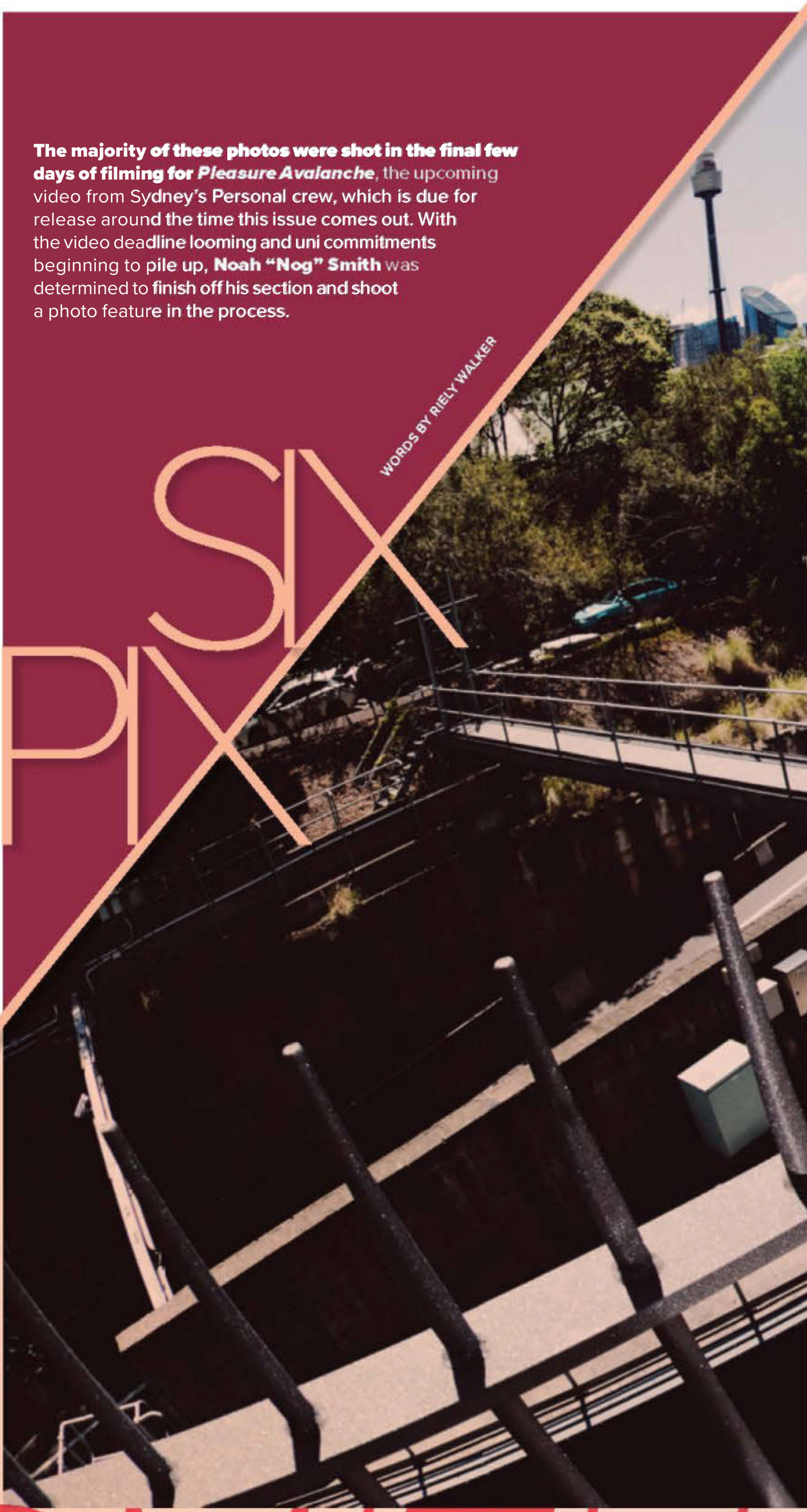
ALWAYS DO WHAT YOU SHOULD DO
EVERLAST
Bronx
NY

PORTRAIT BY THOMAS ROBINSON

The majority of these photos were shot in the final few days of filming for *Pleasure Avalanche*, the upcoming video from Sydney's Personal crew, which is due for release around the time this issue comes out. With the video deadline looming and uni commitments beginning to pile up, **Noah "Nog" Smith** was determined to finish off his section and shoot a photo feature in the process.

WORDS BY RIELY WALKER

SIX PIX SMITH



NOAH

Backside tailslide.
PHOTO: THOMAS ROBINSON

“**I always get a burst of motivation when everyone starts talking about the premiere or video release**”, Nog says of the situation. “And for this video in particular, it’s all of my best friends involved. It’s all tight-knit, and I just feel like I need to have good footage in there to do it all justice.”

With the whip cracking, Nog stuck to his guns and shot enough photos to fill even more than the eight pages allocated for this feature, while heavily inspired by the timeless trick and spot selections of his biggest influences: Gonz, Keith Hufnagel, and Julien Stranger. Nog’s fast and full-on approach to tricks has made him a favourite among pretty much everyone who has watched him skate, and the footage he’s been stacking for both Personal and Cons over the past few months absolutely won’t disappoint. He’s on one.

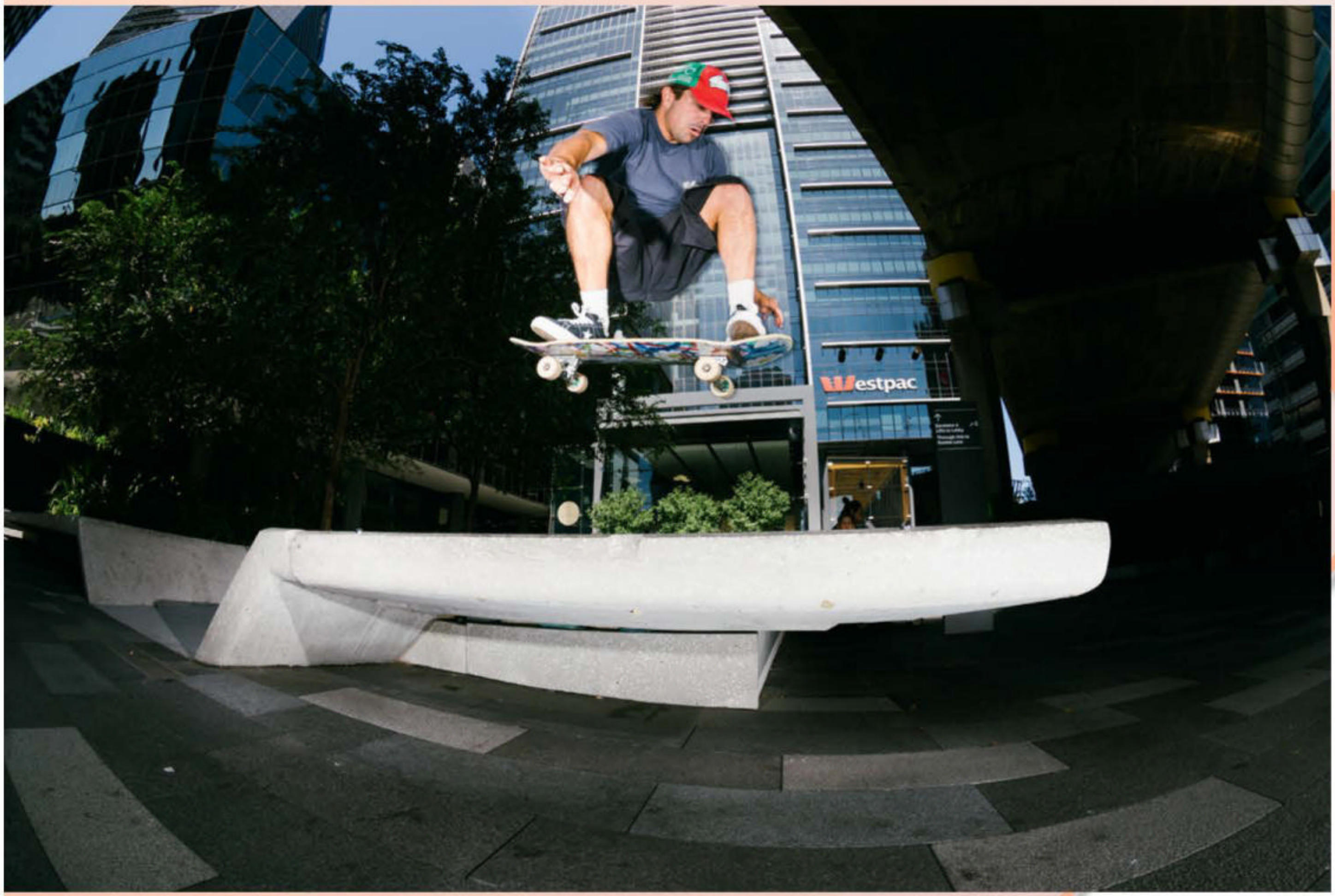
1.

2.

Wallie over the entire “manual pad”.
PHOTO: RIELY WALKER

“**I love wallies**, ollies and 50-50s”, Nog tells me. “I love that those tricks have held their own over the course of skateboarding’s evolution, and they tend to highlight the spot more rather than being all about the trick. You can fill a video part with those tricks and not have it feel tired, as long as the spots are interesting. Old Gonz parts, older Antihero videos, or even a lot of the Pass~Port videos are the best examples. It’s cool that you can still do an ollie today at a unique spot, and it can hold its own against a heavy ledge trick or something very technical.”

You’d be hard-pressed to find anyone who has seen Nog skate live and hasn’t got him pencilled in as one of their favourite skateboarders. Watching him push full pelt into this wallie, bashing against the concrete until he figured it out, was high-quality entertainment in its own right. People usually skate this spot as a manual pad, which indicates how absurd it is to clear the entire thing off the back of momentum alone. It’s a spot built for Nog if ever I’ve seen one – and a timeless trick that makes very little sense upon closer inspection.



We happened upon this spot at one of the last moments of filming for *Pleasure Avalanche* and on the final possible day to shoot photos for this feature. It’s wild how things often work out when a deadline rears its head – Nog had been searching for a spot like this for months, and we only checked the area for spots on a fortunate hunch. Fifteen minutes later, he was rolling away from a tight, Gonz-inspired gap to grind.

“When the deadlines come up, it’s always like, *oh, shit, I need to have a solid section*,” Nog tells me. “I didn’t feel like I had the best chunk of footage yet in Tim’s [Cobden] video, so when the release was locked in, it became a focus to get some tricks I’m really happy with. I don’t have the most footage in the video, but I’ve been getting stuff I’m stoked on, which is great.”

Nog is also a full-time university student, which can make these deadlines all the more stressful, but in his case, it can also make him more productive. He’ll often make the two-hour drive to Sydney straight off the back of morning lectures, huck something for a couple of hours and make the trek home in time for study, or attending his part-time job at a Terrigal bottle shop.

3.

Gap to 50-50.
PHOTO: RIELY WALKER

“Being at uni makes things busier, but it actually helps my skating. It means the window for skating is small, so it’s easier to map everything out and be as productive as possible every time I skate. My brain is switched on when I’m studying, which I need when I’m looking for spots and coming up with tricks – it keeps me switched on, which I’ve enjoyed. When I’m on break or wasn’t studying, it’s easy to completely to switch off and chill all the time.

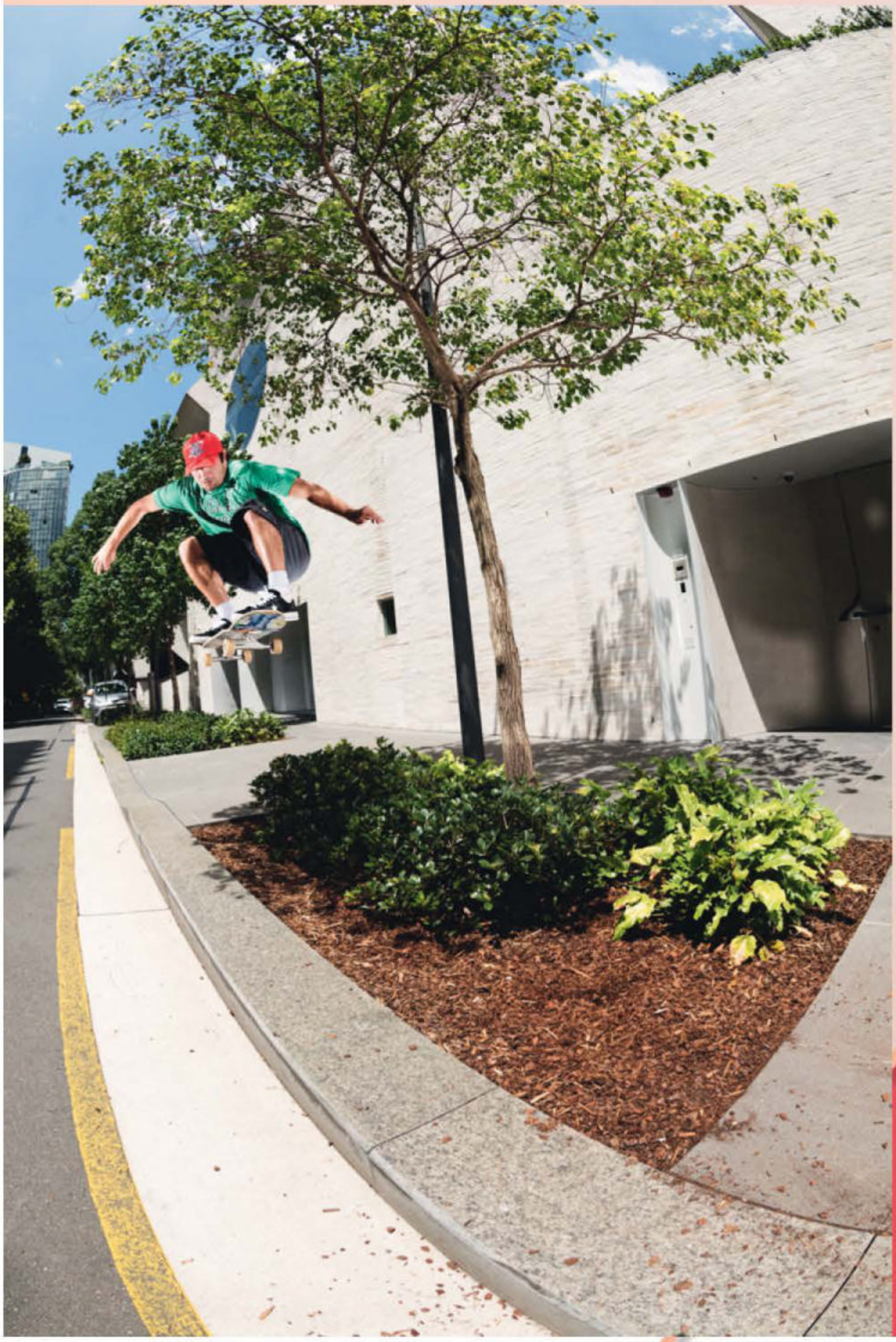
“I’m halfway through a degree in Environmental Science and Management. I’m stoked to study something that can potentially lead to a rewarding career – I’m majoring in sustainability, so that’s the line of work I want to move into when I’m done.
It gives me a nice break from skateboarding and keeps me focused on other things. I’m trying to gather as much experience as possible, and we’ll see how things work out when I graduate.”

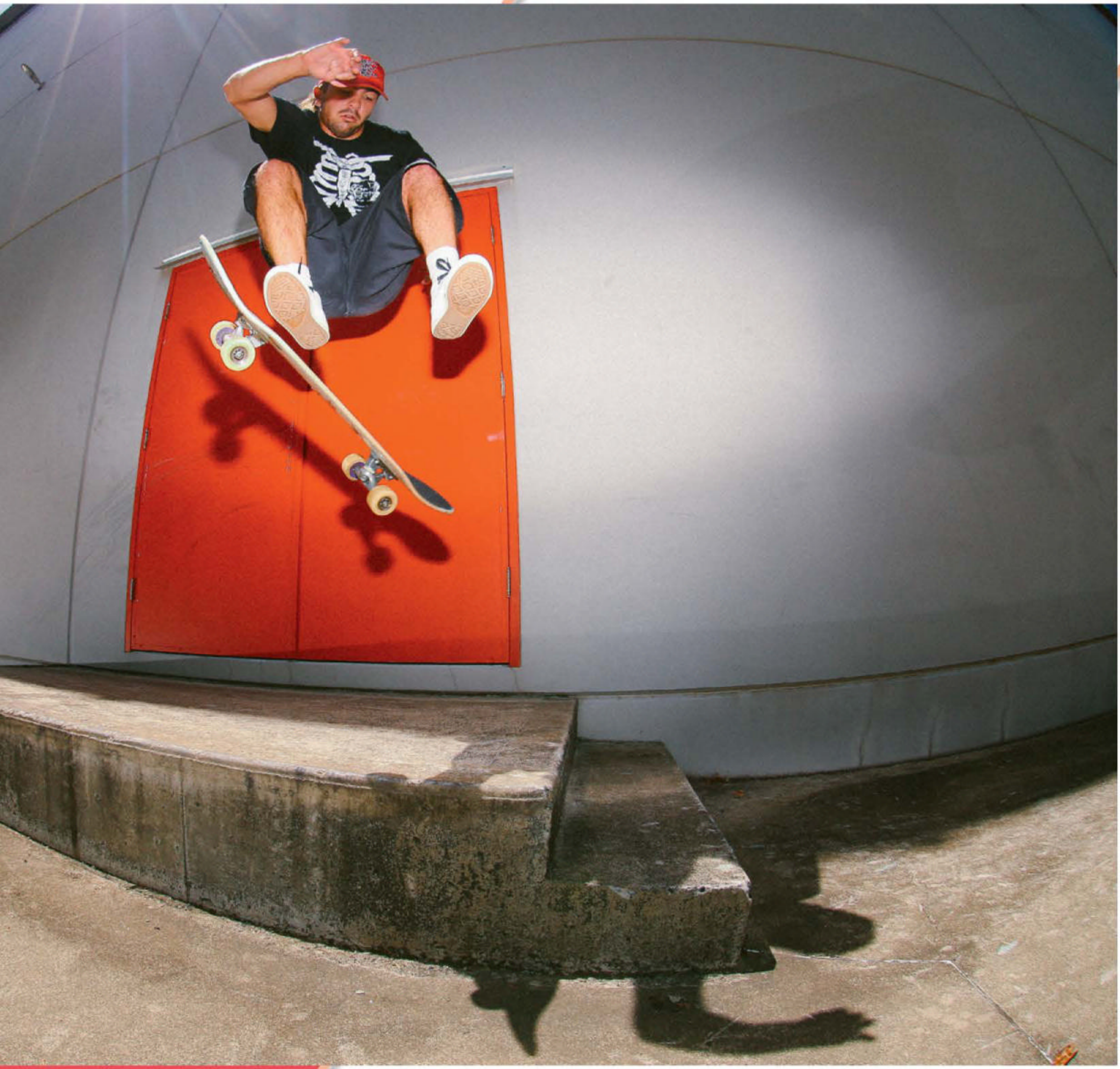
4.

Central Park ollie.
PHOTO: THOMAS ROBINSON

“**The regular Sydney crew has kind of shrunk down recently**, which I think has helped me and Tim become more productive together – as much as I love a big crew,” Nog says of the current Sydney scene.

“It’s cool to focus on one trick, like having a spot in mind and missioning there with a filmer and really going for it, without feeling like you’re taking up everyone’s time. This ollie is one of those tricks that might not happen with a bigger crew. It was just me and Tim, skating around on a weekday, and then Lobby [Thomas Robinson] shot the photo. I like skating early in the morning and knocking off a trick at the start of the day, so you’re not stressing about being productive. Tim is always down for an early start.”





5.

Scholastic 360 Flip.
PHOTO: RIELY WALKER

Despite living on the Central Coast his entire life, I'm almost certain this is the first photo Nog has ever shot there. Spots on the Coast notoriously fall toward the skint end of the spectrum, and this is a pretty rare find in the passable zone. It's got a tight run-up and is far longer than you first expect, so this full-speed 360 flip gets more than a passing grade.

What's especially great is that Nog used to work behind those very red doors at the national Scholastic Books HQ, which for some reason, is located out the back of Gosford, making this trick something of a bittersweet reunion with an old foe.

"I used to spend eight-hour shifts putting stickers onto books, and I ended up just leaving one day and never coming back because they treated us like garbage", he tells me of his time at Scholastic. "It's probably the worst job I've ever had. This spot is the only thing I got out of my time there".

Most skaters from the Central Coast have now made the move to Sydney, but even with an almost non-existent skate scene outside of skateparks, Nog doesn't see himself following suit.

"I like living on the Coast because it gives me a better life balance. I can wake up and go for a surf before work. My girlfriend and I both grew up here and it's just comfortable for us. And living here also makes travelling to Sydney feel like more of a mission, which can make things more productive when I trek it down to the city. The train ride gives me time to catch up on study, listen to podcasts, and mellow out with some downtime. My whole life is pretty much on the Central Coast – family, girlfriend, uni – so I can't see myself leaving at any point soon."

PRIVATE PROPERTY CCTV

6.

Backside 50-50.
PHOTO: RIELY WALKER

One of the main themes in the *Pleasure Avalanche* video process has been a tendency to get out of the city and into the suburbs, with Tim and the crew devoting endless hours to hunting down un-skated spots like this one in Sydney's leafy suburban locales. This particular spot epitomises Nog's approach to skateboarding perfectly: the untouched ledge would barely grind at all, but when irritated residents began to lurk, his method was to simply skate faster and push through the grit. The result was a Mach 10 grind and pop out, straight into a parked car, and my light stand at high speed, entirely crushing one of the legs on my stand in the process. Not fully content, he went back up and did an even faster one, with an even more brutal post-trick meeting with a parked Toyota.

"I'm skating with Ben [Hennessy] most of the time, and he's the best when it comes to house spots and stuff that hasn't been skated, which has been influential on the rest of us", Nog says of his approach to this video. "Gary [Almeida], Ben and myself aren't out to hit spots that have been skated for 20 years and [rather] do something that stands out. Tim has been motivated to hunt for spots just outside of the city, so we've been spending a lot of time exploring more suburban areas where we can find new spots that stand out. House spots are sick – I'm always watching old Huf footage, or Julien Stranger skating driveways in SF – and then all of the newer footage of guys like Nick Michel in LA where they're finding new stuff in the most blown-out cities. I'm influenced by all of that. Rowan Zorilla, too – he's probably my favourite of the lot." ▲

DEDICATED TO WADE THOMPSON

Filmed over the past two years, *Pleasure Avalanche* is Tim Cobden's first video since the passing of close friend and legendary member of the Sydney skate scene, Wade Thompson. The video is named in Wade's honour, and Nog was clear in how much of an influence he had on everyone involved with the project.

"Wade had such an important impact on the whole crew in this video – he was part of the older generation of Sydney skaters, but he was so down for the younger guys and could match anyone's energy," Nog reflects. "He tied together the Sydney scene, like the bridge between the old heads and young crew. He was mates with everyone, and I feel like he helped mesh a lot of different crews together. Looking back, that helped build the crew in this video.

When he passed, the guys were all motivated to push harder for him in whatever we do, not necessarily just skateboarding. Wade was always supportive of his mates when they were achieving things either in or out of skating, no matter how big or small. I think that mindset influenced us younger guys in the best possible way."

MAKING

After 20 straight hours of transit, all we wanted was a soft landing and a dark, air-conditioned room to rest our weary bones. But Jakarta wouldn't wait. We were whisked straight to a welcome dinner with the Vans Asia Pacific skaters and an entourage of filmers, photographers, organisers, and media. There were about 30 of us in total – skaters from Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Singapore, Australia, The Philippines and various islands in Indonesia. The crew was great, the food was spicy and the beer was free-flowing – setting the tone for a whirlwind five days in Jakarta and Bali to celebrate the release of *Lava*, the latest video from Vans APAC.

Featuring full parts from two of Indonesia's most promising young talents, Rubianda Rachman and Basral Graito, along with cameos from Rome Collyer, Digby Luxton and the rest of the Vans APAC team, the video reveals a phenomenal and perhaps underappreciated skate scene in Southeast Asia. Our jaunt through Jakarta and Bali was to celebrate *Lava*'s world premieres and the vibes were high. We got to witness two world-class demos, followed by two prems, a few sessions at super rough street spots, one hungover day at a hotel pool, and a glimpse at the sights, smells and sounds that make Indonesia such a special place. In the midst of the crazy schedule, I found a few spare moments to sit down with the visionaries behind *Lava* and find out how this little masterpiece came to be. Introducing Joy Suryawan, Indonesian filmer and extremely laidback human, and Mark Khor, Malaysian filmer, Vans APAC TM and feverish demo hype man.

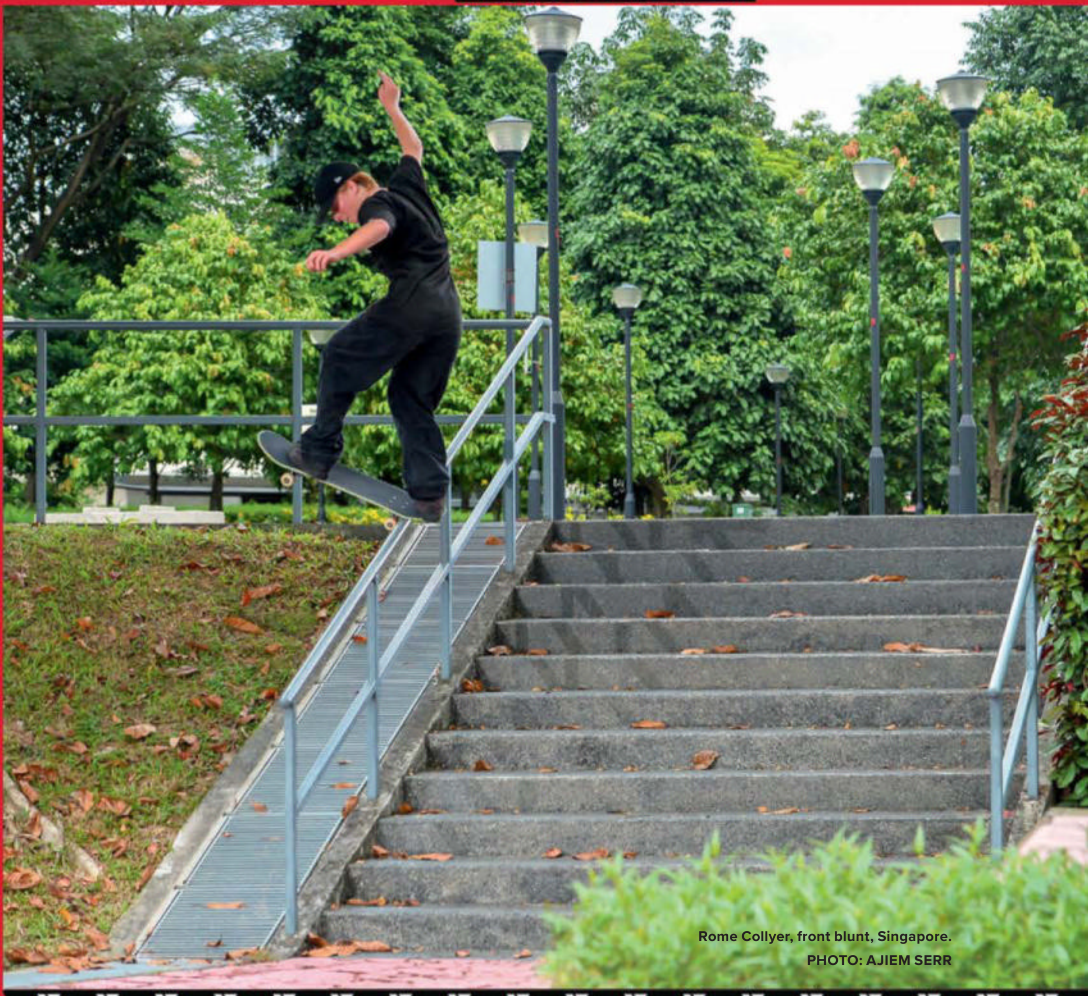
LAVA

VANS APAC VIDEO

WORDS BY NAT KASSEL
PHOTOS BY BRYCE GOLDER
(EXCEPT WHERE NOTED)

ARTWORK BY EKA SUDARMA PUTRA
VOLCANO PHOTO BY AJIEM SERR

Mark Khor, Joy Suryawan, Rome Collyer and Basral Graito.



Rome Collyer, front blunt, Singapore.
PHOTO: AJIEM SERR

"IN BALI, WE BELIEVE THAT A VOLCANO ERUPTION IS A REINCARNATION FOR MOTHER NATURE."
– Joy Suryawan

How are you guys feeling now that the video is finished?
Mark Khor: I think the first initial feeling was relief. The last two weeks before the video came out were crazy. We were getting one hour of sleep per day. We did a Singapore trip and were in Kuala Lumpur for those final few weeks before the deadline. Joy was running out getting last-minute clips with Rubi while I was editing, and then in that final week, we were both editing. But overall, the feeling is solid and nice.

It's crazy because a year ago, we released a video called *Nusantara* with Indonesian, Malaysian, and Singaporean guys. People were hyped and it got good reviews on the Vans YouTube channel. But this video has had the same reaction times 10. We've had international media asking for clips to repost. Everybody from everywhere is hyped on Rubi and Basral. I'm reading comments from people saying, "Indonesian pride!" It gets people going. When people came to Asia in the past, they went to China and Japan, but more recently, people are coming to Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia. All these places are so different, but they're becoming more established in international skateboarding.
Joy Suryawan: I'm so happy that the video is out now. I'm hyped to see how the video has been received, especially by Indonesians. I hope these guys can go further in their careers. I think it's a beginning for Rubi and Basral to have better careers in skateboarding and go on more trips. I'm excited about that. It's great to see these guys going on the road, filming tricks with friends, having laughs and loving it. This is how it's supposed to be.

Tell me about the filming process for *Lava* and the concept behind the title.
Joy: The concept for the video came from Tommy Zhao [former Vans APAC TM]. He wanted Rubianda Rachman and Basral Graito in the video together. We went to Thailand, Malaysia twice and Singapore, plus all the trips to different parts of Indonesia. I've been living on the road with Rubi for months, skating and filming. Basral filmed for about a year and some of Rubi's earliest footage would be from a year and a half ago.

We call this region the "Ring of Fire" because it's on a fault line and the equator, so we have hotter seasons and tropical weather. We also have a lot of active volcanoes. The volcanoes can destroy you, but they also bring life. Lava kills people, kills animals and pollutes the air we breathe, but lava also makes the soil perfect, cleans water, and makes the region more fertile. In Bali, we believe that a volcano eruption is a reincarnation of mother nature. Balinese Hindus like me believe in reincarnation – you die, and then you're born again. And with skateboarding, it's desctructive, but it's also about giving a life to the younger generation – people like Rubi and Basral. They can have a better life through skateboarding. Then I chose the artist Eka Sudarma Putra who does black and white art here in Bali. You see black and white everywhere in Bali – ying and yang, good and bad, high and low, life and death. It makes everything balanced. That's why I wanted Eka's black and white art in the video.
Mark: People look at a volcano and it's so majestic, but at the same time, it's so deadly. When it erupts, it can kill you. When the lava comes out, it makes the soil fertile and brings life. It's the same thing with skateboarding. A lot of people view it as a negative thing, but it brings people together. It gets people excited, and there are many more positive things that come out of skateboarding. We get such great experiences out of skateboarding.

And let's talk about the stars of the show. What's Rubianda Rachman like?
Mark: Rubi is a bit mysterious. He has a very special feel to his skating. It's very different. He's only 18, but his trick selection and the way he approaches spots is different and well beyond his age. And maybe that's because he's surrounded by guys like Mario [Palandeng] and Absar [Lebeh], who have been in the skate scene in Indonesia for so long. Maybe that has helped him to grow into who he is. His skating is different from those guys, but he applies the influence and the discipline. You don't have to tell him anything, he knows what he wants to do and that's one of the coolest things about skating with Rubi.
Joy: Rubi loves chilling and listening to music. He listens to everything. Lately, he's been into Afro-beats and Afro-punk. He's a mature kid. Some 18-year-old kids are partying hard, but he's super mellow. He's different, but he's super fun. With skating, he has his own vision of how he wants his skating to look. No one in Indonesia skates like him. It's cool to watch this kid since he was 13 knowing what he wants to do. As an Indonesian, I think Rubi and Basral are the golden boys of Indonesia and we're in a golden era of Indonesian street skateboarding.

Basral Graito, kickflip, Bangkok.
PHOTO: BRYCE GOLDER

“WHEN PEOPLE CAME TO ASIA IN THE PAST, THEY WENT TO CHINA AND JAPAN, BUT MORE RECENTLY, PEOPLE ARE COMING TO THAILAND, MALAYSIA, SINGAPORE AND INDONESIA.” – Mark Khor

Right, Basral Graito opens the video. What’s Basral like?
Mark: People in Indonesia all know who Basral is. They know his skating because he always shows up in contests and posts a lot on Instagram. He’s only 15. Everyone knows him as a contest skater and before now, people hadn’t seen him put out a proper street part. Our whole goal in this video was to show that he can do that as well. On our first trip with him, before *Lava* was a thing, we only had four days and he got almost two minutes of clips. We saw that he had the potential to film a legit street part and we kept it going. Basral’s clips are almost all from our trips, and we only did three trips with him. He filmed everything in less than a year.

Basral is also a sleeping pig [laughs]. He sleeps like a log. He stays up so late playing games and then he’s almost dead in the morning. In Jakarta, he was skating all night after the demo, with no filmer or photographer. It’s cool, though. He’s a total skate rat.

Can you explain what happened with Basral yesterday?
Mark: Yesterday, we wanted to head out on the session around 10am, but Basral and Toa [Sasaki] were still sleeping. Everybody else waited at the van for an hour or more, and then they left. Basral and Toa decided to come later on the motorbike, but then they didn’t show up at the spot. Basral called me up like, “Mark, we have a big problem. I need your help.” He sounded like he was about to cry. He’d crashed his motorbike into a car. I asked how bad it was and he said it was bad – one of the bumpers had fallen off. The guy asked for three million rupiah [AUD $300] to fix it. He’s 15 and they weren’t even wearing helmets. It’s pretty crazy. I was a bit worried. It’s not the call you want to get when you’re the TM, but as long as they’re safe and OK. He’s still trying to get me to help him with the money [laughs]. I’m going to have to figure out how to get some Vans money to pay for it.

Digby Luxton, backside nollie, Bangkok.
PHOTO: BRYCE GOLDER

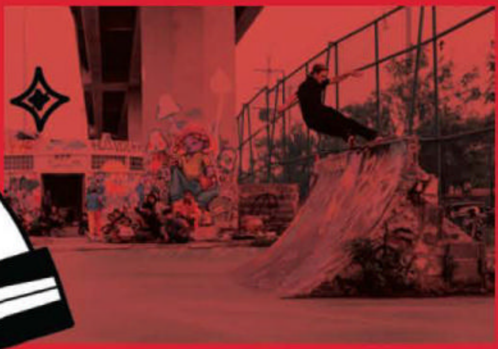
And there was some Australian representation in the video. How was it filming with Rome Collyer and Digby Luxton?
Joy: Rome is brave enough to skate any spot. He’s one of the best Australians that I’ve ever filmed with. Most Australians are crazy. I’ve met so many of them in Bali – I think half of Bali is owned by Australians, and a lot of them are mad, but Rome is different. He’s so cool, mellow and super polite, but he’s funny at the same time. I think he’s stoked to be travelling all over the world at 16 [now 17]. He loves skateboarding. Rome has been on three or four trips with us, but I only met Digby on the Bangkok trip. Thailand was crazy. I think Digby loved it. He’s a really good guy. I love him. His style of skating is really sick. In Thailand, Digby was drinking so much. He was drinking beer after beer while we were hanging out. He was never drinking water, just beer all the time. And then Rome is super quiet and super good. He’s like a young Shane O’Neill, doing everything super technical and super clean. He just kills the spots and makes it all look beautiful.
Mark: Yeah, so I met Rome and Digby on the Thailand trip for the Half-Cab event. Everything Digby filmed was in that one trip to Bangkok. Before that, I’d only seen them in *Nice To See You*. Digby’s cool. He’s funny without even trying to be. Skating wise, it’s cool to see how he skates. Rome and Digby are completely opposite in style. Digby is loose like jelly and whatever he does, he seems to be able to make it. Rome is something else – he’s a proper skateboarder and does everything so clean. The first thing I filmed with him was a line with a crook kickflip out, and he filmed that twice. I thought it looked good the first time, but he wanted to get it really clean. He knows what he wants with his skating, which is cool for a 16-year-old.

Any stories from Thailand?
Joy: On the last day in Thailand, I was chilling with Rome and Rubi because they were underage. So it was me, Daiki [Hoshino], Rubi, Rome and Shor [West]. Shor had an idea to go and get a massage – just a normal massage. We went to find one, and Shor was following the map. It was such a sketchy place. I told Shor, “I think this is like a “full-service” Thai massage. We need to find somewhere else.” So then someone came in a tuk-tuk from the middle of nowhere, asking if we wanted a massage. I said we didn’t want full service, just a normal massage. He brought all five of us in a tuk-tuk to another massage place. It was so sketchy again, going through a dark alley in the middle of Bangkok. Nothing made it look like a full-service massage though. The ladies were older. So we went in there, and then we hear Daiki screaming from the other room, “Don’t touch my balls!” [laughs]. The lady asked, “How old are you?” He said he was 20 and she said, “You are the same age as my son.” [laughs]. That was crazy. Afterwards, everyone was just quiet.

And what about this trip through Jakarta and Bali? How has it been for you guys?
Mark: Coming into the very last day of editing the video, we were prepping ourselves to celebrate and we were hyped. The scene in Indonesia draws a lot of people. When they have events like Go Skate Day, thousands of people come out, so we were excited to come here. For me, Jakarta was cool because it's Rubi's hometown. I liked to see his family come out and see the reactions of everybody to the video. There's a lot of excitement in watching Basral and Rubi see their own parts too. Same with Joy, it was great watching the video in his hometown here in Bali.

Filming in Bali, we already know that spots here are more challenging because the streets are so rough. It's rainy season now and there's moss on the ground, so it's slippery. Skating the spots in Bali is hard, but it's cool to see these guys skating the bus stop handrails and getting clips. These guys are next-level. It will be amazing to see what they do in the next five years. I love going on trips with them because you can see history in the making. They're growing up and we get to see their process of getting to their peak.
Joy: This trip? It isn't a trip for me. I'm at home here in Bali. Jakarta was a trip, but I've been there so many times. Bringing Japanese people – like Daiki and Toa – to the demo was crazy. Sometimes when I see them skate, I'm speechless. They hit these big obstacles and get tricks first and second try. Every skate trip with the Vans youngsters is the easiest job in the world. They're not partying, they wake up hyped to skate, and they have so much energy. Every time we go out, they're down.

Rubianda Rachman, back Smith, Malaysia.
PHOTO: AJIEM SERR



What's next for Vans APAC? Another video, or is it too soon to ask?
Mark: Even on this trip, we're still stacking clips. We just don't quite know what we will do with them yet. At the moment, I don't know what's next, but I'm only aiming to do more stuff like this. It's just good to get everyone from the whole APAC team together. I want all these guys to stay connected. You get tired of social media. We want everyone to come together, skate, go on trips and have experiences. We want this team to be actual friends instead of commenting on each other's clips online. I'd rather they come on and skate, hug the homies, do stupid shit, crash motorbikes and basically, live. That's what skateboarding's about. That's what I hope to do for the next chapter and whatever comes will come. ▲

You're French but moved to Christchurch in New Zealand when you were young, right?
Yeah, my mum is French, with her side of the family all living there. I was born in Leeds and moved to Christchurch when I was seven.

What was it like growing up there?
Christchurch was a great place to grow up. My parents lived close to some nice walks, which is something I miss about NZ. With skateboarding, I think the scene goes through waves. As with most quiet places, people from Christchurch often move to bigger cities when their career starts gaining momentum. Wash [Washington Way] will always be my favourite skatepark – as it is for most people who've been there.

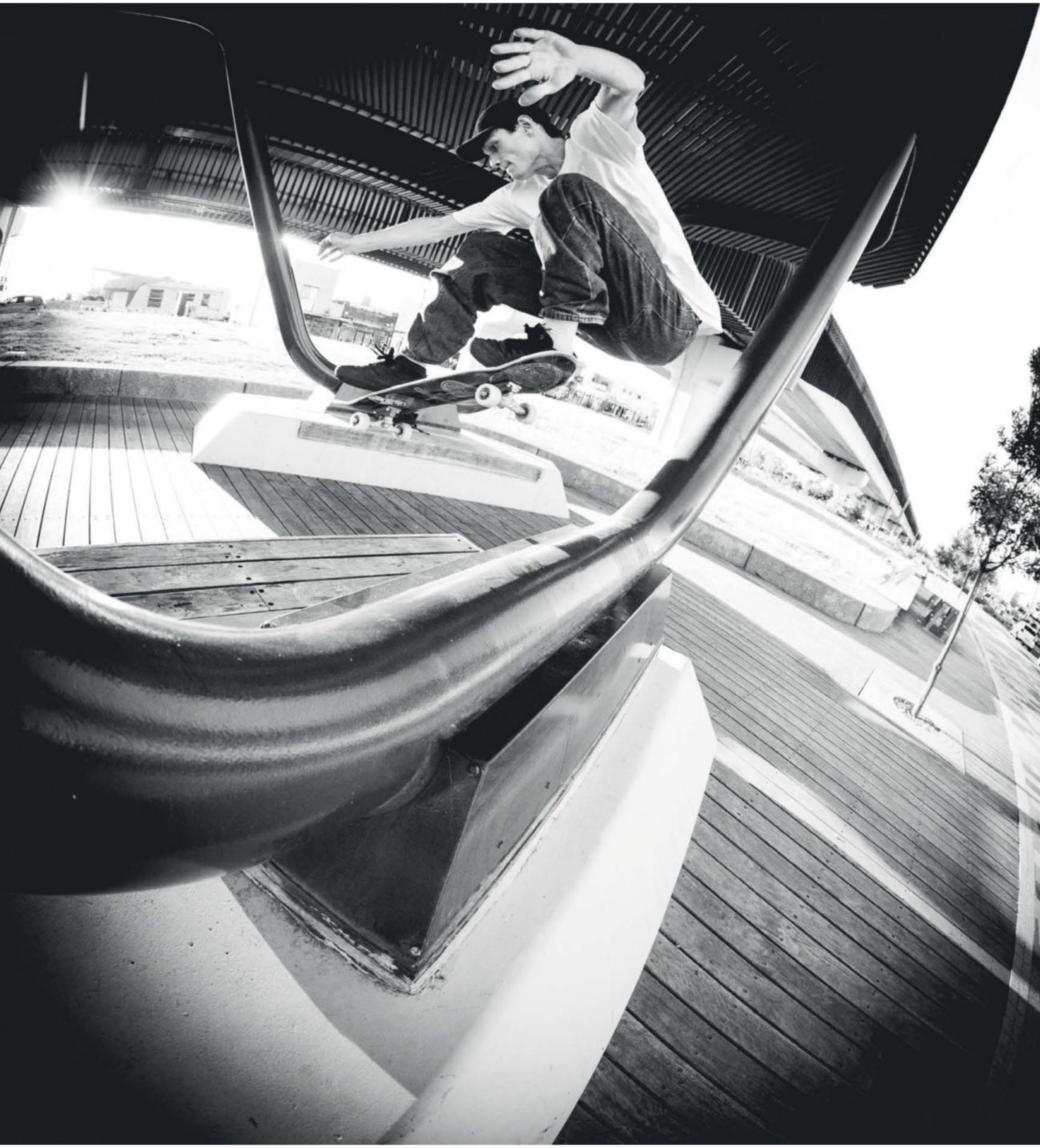
Are you a proud Kiwi?
Yep, I'm proud to be a Kiwi!

Matthieu Lucas D'Souza

AGE: 22
LIVES: Melbourne
RIDES FOR: Vans, Pass~Port [flow]

PORTRAIT: BRYCE GOLDER

Matthieu bashes a full-power wallie up and over the bar. **PHOTO: TOMOKI PETERS**



Your name is very French. Do you have a solid connection to that side of your heritage?
When I was younger, I was fluent and went to a French after-school program. Nowadays, my French is atrocious, and I can hardly speak it. I'd love to change that by going over and spending time there as much as possible.

What brought on the move to Melbourne? And how do you like it?
I've wanted to move for some time now and always paid attention to what was happening here. It took a couple of close friends of mine to move for me to come, too. Melbourne's been refreshing. Lots of people are keen to skate, the spots are new to me, and it's been nice to feel like a stranger in the city.

Tell us about the King of IMAX Friday event that went down recently.
It was a game of SKATE between a bunch of our friends, and it got some traction online. Heaps of people showed up, and it made for an insane night. Tai Wepa took it out this time.

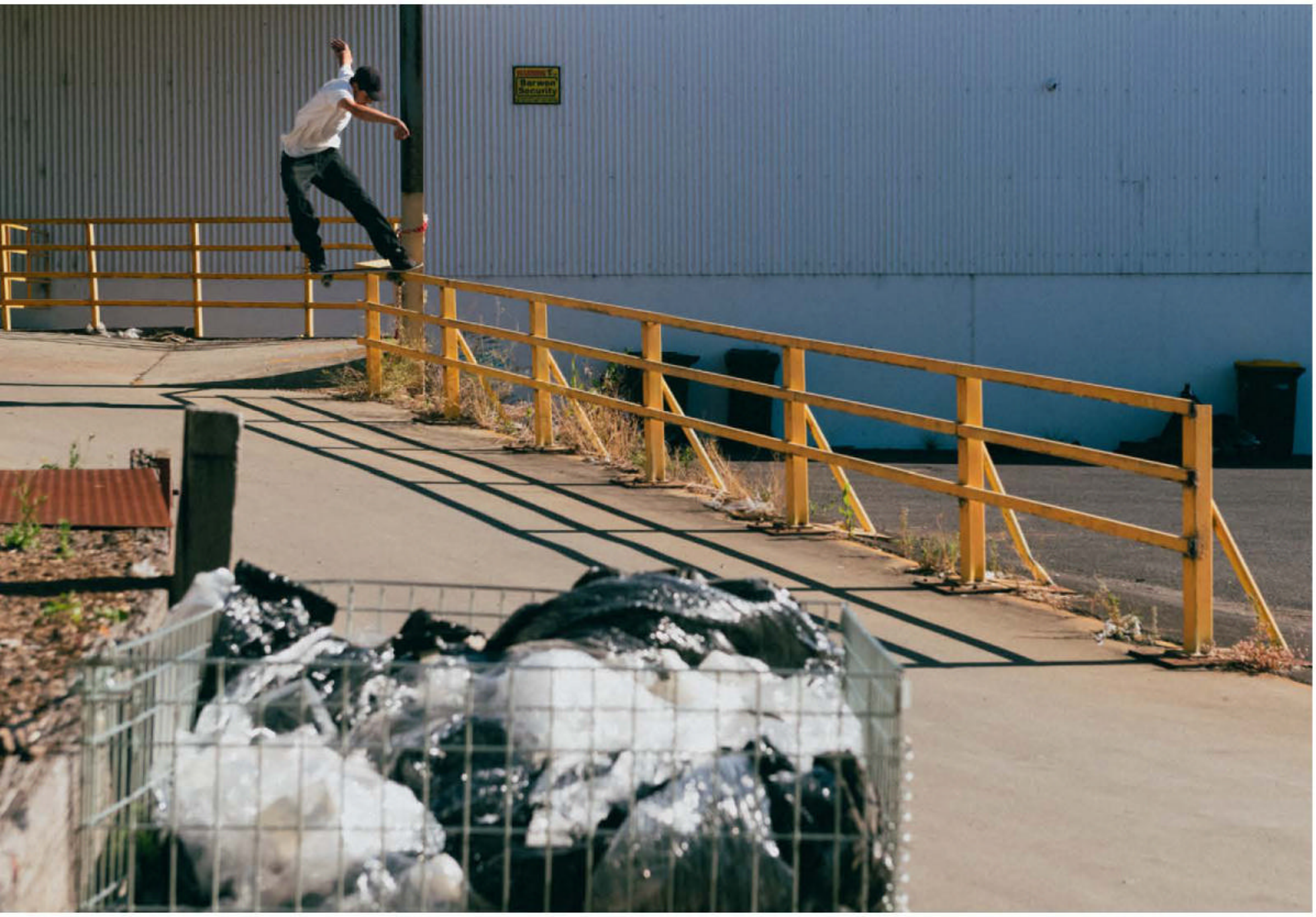
Word has it that it was pretty wild, with lots of broken glass and some graffers tagged the IMAX building. Were there concerns about jeopardising the spot long-term, or has it all blown over?
People are skating there now, but if you were to have hundreds of people all together watching a game of SKATE, it might get attention again. With the broken glass, we will emphasise bringing cans in the future. As for the graff, there's talk of getting in some security.

So, you were riding for Pass~Port in NZ, then you quit to ride for Daylight, then quit Daylight to ride for Pass~Port again. What's the full story on that?
In NZ, I was getting Pass~Port boards now and then from Sam Crabtree through Collab Distribution. Luke Browne, who runs Daylight and is good friends with Crabtree, hit Crabtree and me up to see if sending me some Daylight boards was cool. Daylight has been one of my favourite companies, plus Luke has made some of the best vids to come out of NZ, and I was already good friends with some of the team, so it felt natural to ride for Daylight.

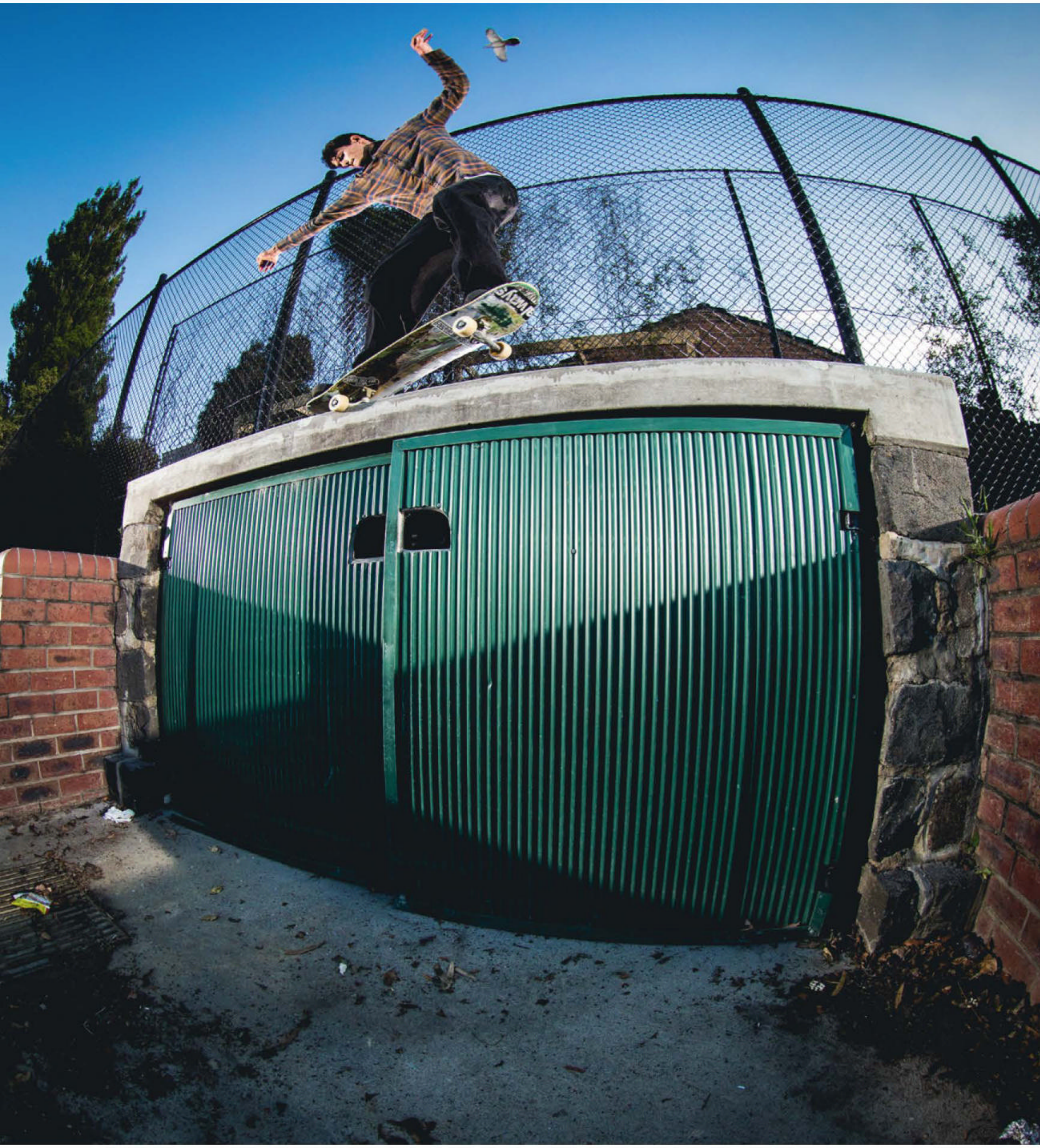
I knew I was going to move to Melbourne, and Luke told me to go for it if something good came up while living here. I'm super appreciative of Luke for saying that, knowing there's much more of an industry here.

Since being in Melbourne, I've been filming a bit for a Vans vid with Jon Fitzgerald. During this time, I've been going through boards much faster than I did, working full time in NZ and skating Wash. Geoff Campbell had told me that he had been vouching for me to Pass~Port, which Jon caught wind of and followed up. Trent Evans was down to send me some boards and see how I go. I called up Luke and he was supportive of me getting boards from Pass~Port, so that's when I quit Daylight, and I got sent Pass~Port boards.

Born in Leeds, raised in Christchurch and coming from French heritage, Matthieu took a quick trip to Gee-long for this frontside tailslide.
PHOTO: BRYCE GOLDER



A bird watching backside nosegrind.
PHOTO: TOMOKI PETERS



Fair enough. Pass~Port is a dream sponsor for so many up-and-comers, especially in Australia. How does it feel getting flow from them?
Yeah, Pass~Port is the dream sponsor. Having Geoff and Jon vouch for me is why I got the packy. It's all very new but I'm grateful to have gotten a box full of boards, We'll see where it goes from here.

What do the words "Smash Palace" mean to you?
One of our beloved pubs in Christchurch. Great people, great location, perfect for sun hunting.

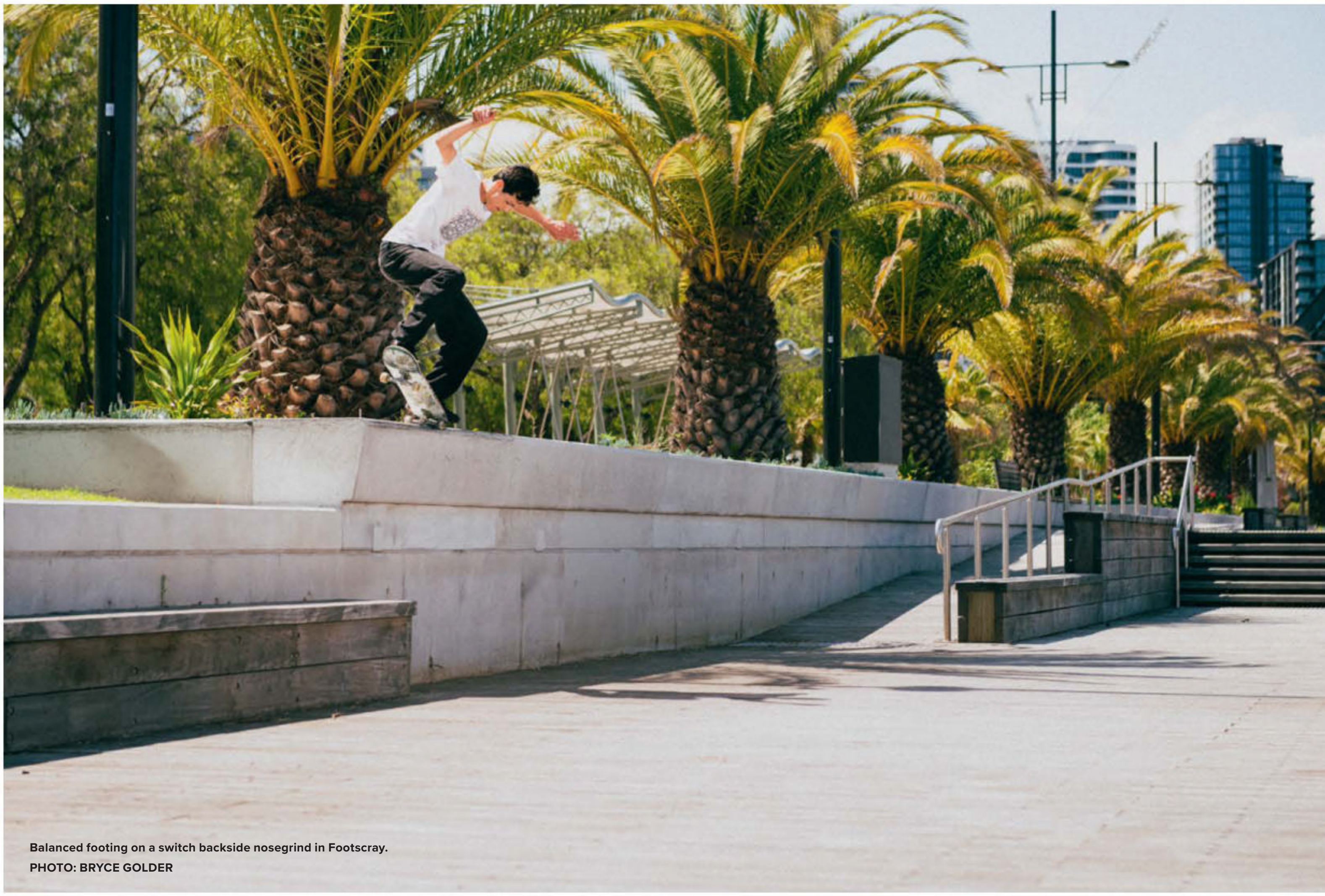
Who's Popey, and what's the best thing you've seen in his fridge?
Andrew Pope, AKA Popey, is a good friend of mine who made our weekends a lot more entertaining once we met him. He'd always be keen to talk about anything with us, and a lot of the time it would be hard to get a word in. He would always have craft beers and seemed to have a really good relationship with food, so we started joking about what might be in Popey's fridge. Turns out, his fridge is usually stacked to the brim with craft beers and seafood.

Can you tell us about your tribute part to Kent Edgeworth?
Kent, AKA Laka, is a Christchurch OG, and now a good friend of mine. He's great at fishing, super witty, and has done some of my favourite skating in Christchurch. When I was a grom, I did a few ABDs that Kent had done. This paired with using a Smiths song that was used in a part of his, and there you go – a tribute. I obviously did this not knowing of Laka's skating at the time.

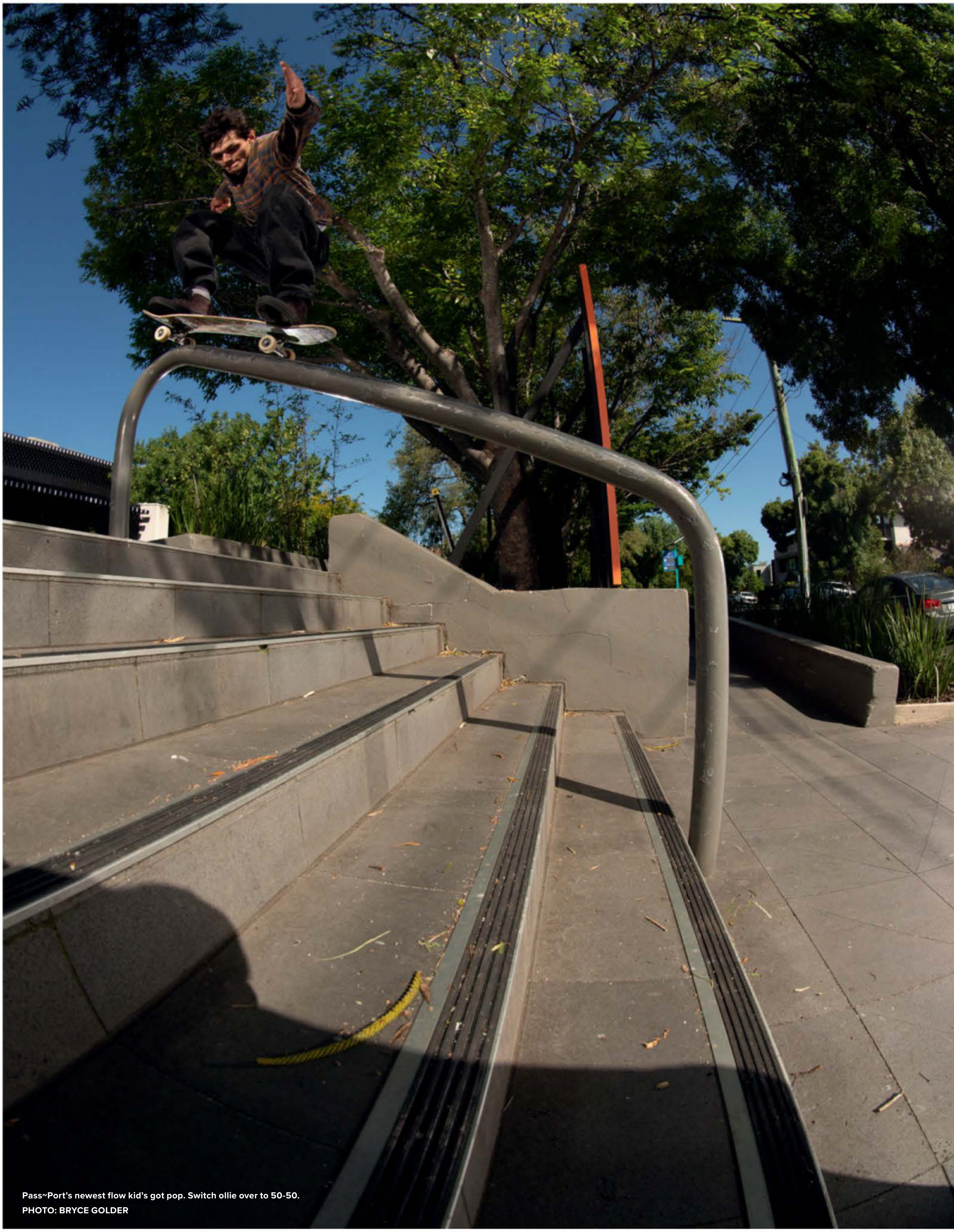
Who were some of the other skaters – pro or not – who influenced you when you first started skating?
When I started it would've just been *The Berrics*. As I started to figure it out a little, I would always watch Geoff Campbell's videos, anything with James Wright, and the vids people a few years older than me would make in Duds [Dunedin]. I suppose I had a very South Island oriented influence.

Did you have a job building swimming pools?
In NZ, I installed industrial swimming pool complexes all over the country. It was a super cool job and I had to travel a fair bit for it, which was a cool way to see NZ. The majority of the pools were stainless steel, with PVC liner on the floor and sealed with silicon between the two surfaces. I really loved that job. I learnt so many skills, and every day I'd be doing something different. I had to leave that job to move here. Fortunately, I've saved enough to support myself for a while until I find something to do here.

Right, so what's next for you, Matthieu? Any big travel plans, or are you staying put in Melbourne for a while?
I'm pretty content living in Melbourne at this point. As for my travelling endeavours, ideally, I'll find some work to support going to France and spend [Melbourne] winters there. ▲



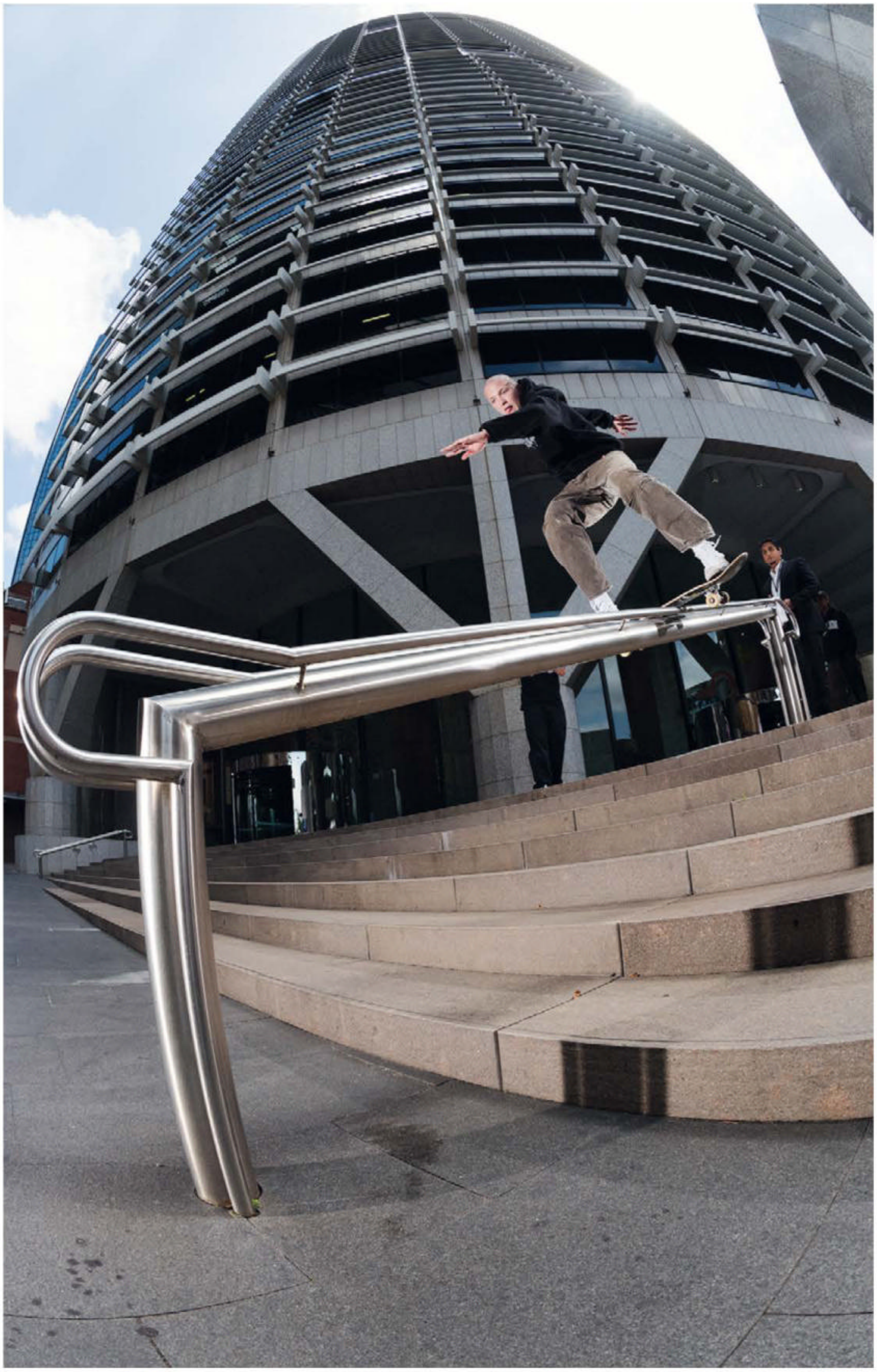
Balanced footing on a switch backside nosegrind in Footscray.
PHOTO: BRYCE GOLDER



Pass~Port's newest flow kid's got pop. Switch ollie over to 50-50.
PHOTO: BRYCE GOLDER

ASTRO MARTY

AGE: **18** LIVES: **Surry Hills, Sydney** RIDES FOR: **Personal**



“Astro’s got some fucked up outfits. On a trip to Melbourne, he stayed with us and we were sussing out all the clothes he bought. Gary [Almeida] was like, ‘Bro, what is up with this shit? Doesn’t Tim give you clothes?’ He owns this Portugal polo shirt that I reckon is up there with one of the ugliest shirts I’ve ever seen. But I love Astro and I miss him.” **– Anthony Gotsis**

“Astro is so gullible that he still thinks Beau Reid is the Cons TM. In all seriousness, though, Astro is a really good kid. He’s super polite and skates sick.” **– Tim Cobden**

This is one of those spots in Sydney city that everyone has looked at but typically deemed too hard to hit. It’s a bust and the run-up’s terrible. Astro prevails with a kinked boardslide. PHOTOS: THOMAS ROBINSON

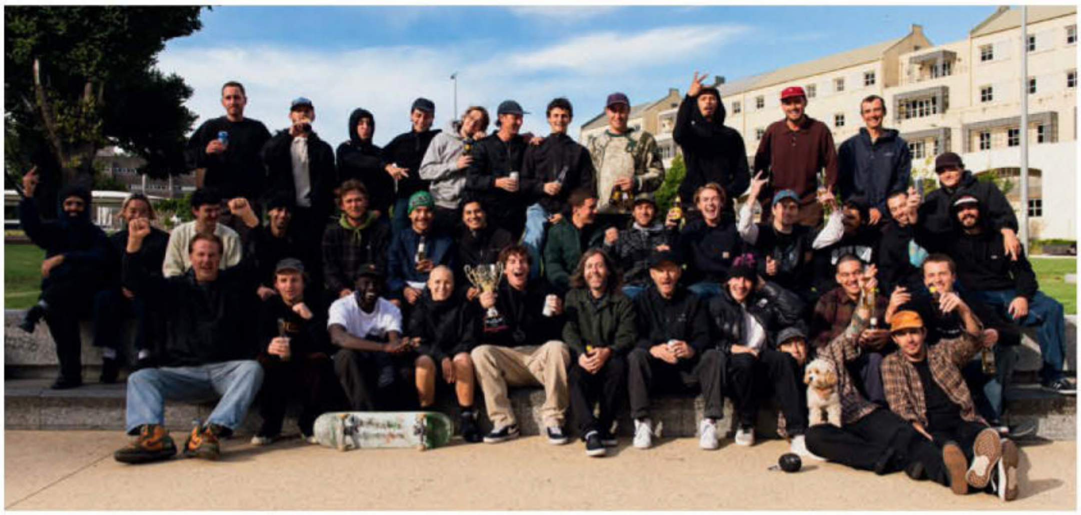
CONCRETE SKATE SUPPLY

LENARD TEJADA TRE FLIP | PHOTOGRAPHY BY SAM COADY

RILEY PAVEY'S

Photos by Bryce Golder

SOTY SURPRISE, MELBOURNE



Riley Pavey's SOTY surprise went down on an otherwise ordinary day at No Piss Plaza in Carlton. The finest of Melbourne skateboarders came out to pop bottles with the young Queenslander, who would go on to break his own trophy in a drunken dash from the cops later in the night. We offered to replace it, but Pavey said he likes the story behind the broken bobblehead cup. Congrats, Pavey!

Pavey's facial expression was priceless.

Pure joy with Clocky.

Champagne showers.

Anthony Mapstone and Hayley Wilson in the mix.

Riley's housemate Anthony Gotsis has a swig from the SOTY cup.

Filmers unite: Jon Fitzgerald, Chris Middlebrook and Geoff Campbell.

A pour of Gotsis' sickly sparkling red – no doubt the catalyst for Pavey's cracking hangover the morning after.

Corey Young and Nick Boserio chowing down.

With one eye open and the other shut, Riley was ready to try his luck at the Casino.

Digby Luxton and Brass.

Geoff, Nick Boserio and Trent Fahey.

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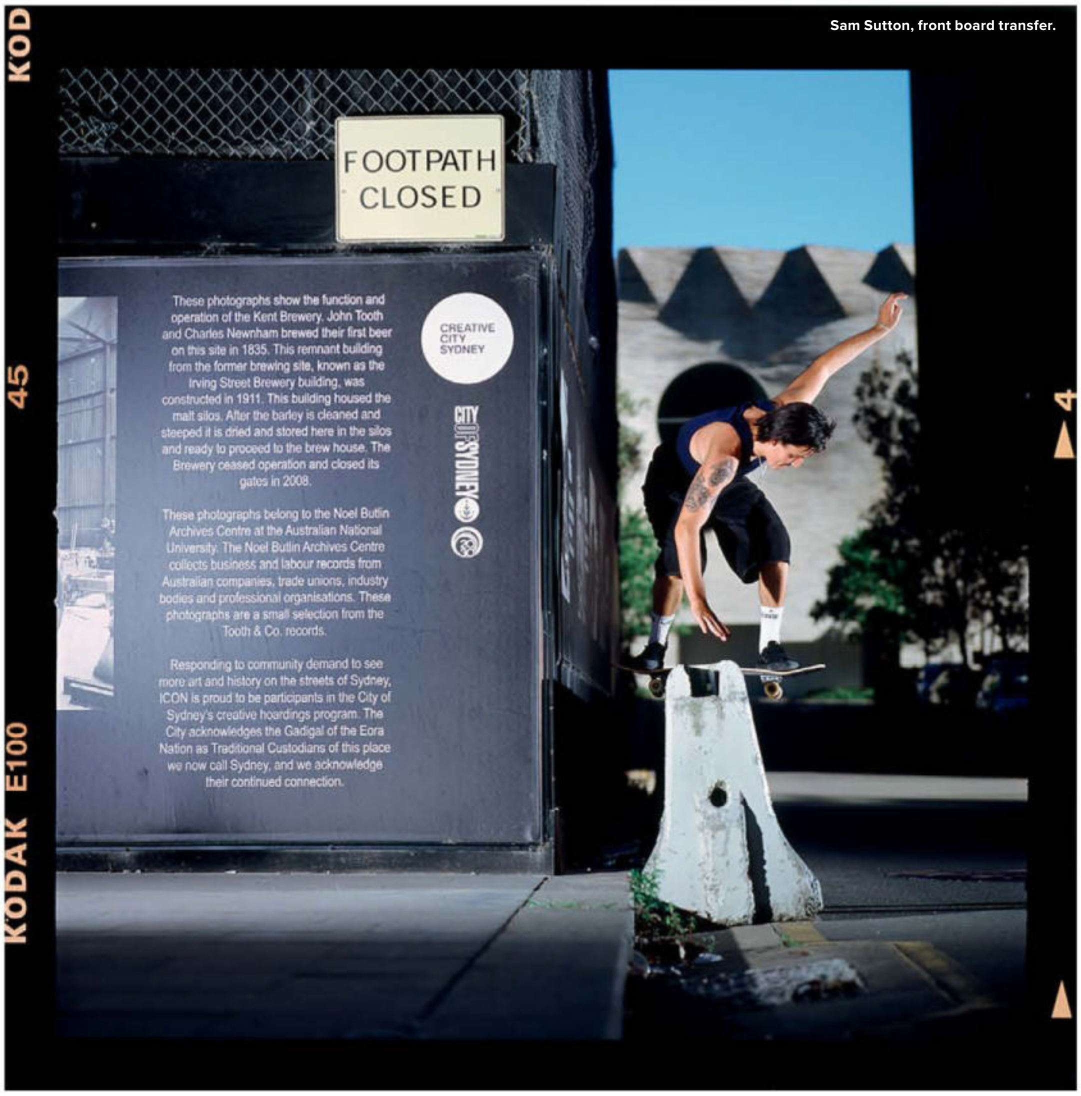
COREY YOUNG
PHOTO: RIELY WALKER

TAKE IT PERSONAL

Words and photos by Dave Chami

A DAY WITH THE PERSONAL CREW FILMING FOR *PLEASURE AVALANCE*

I was back in Sydney for a few weeks with just a couple of film cameras at my disposal – the trusty Hasselblad 500cm and Hasselblad XPan. I tagged along with some of the Personal crew for a day: Tim Cobden, Gary Almeida, Noah Nayef, Sam Sutton, Jarrad Carlin, Ben Hennessy, Felix Donnelly and Astro Marty. A couple of hours lurking around Central Park in Sydney, and we probably only moved about 100 metres the whole time. Often the best plan is to have no plan, and the city will provide. If you don't like it, then take it Personal.▲


KOD
45
KODAK E100
4
FOOTPATH CLOSED
These photographs show the function and operation of the Kent Brewery. John Tooth and Charles Newnham brewed their first beer on this site in 1835. This remnant building from the former brewing site, known as the Irving Street Brewery building, was constructed in 1911. This building housed the malt silos. After the barley is cleaned and steeped it is dried and stored here in the silos and ready to proceed to the brew house. The Brewery ceased operation and closed its gates in 2008.
These photographs belong to the Noel Butlin Archives Centre at the Australian National University. The Noel Butlin Archives Centre collects business and labour records from Australian companies, trade unions, industry bodies and professional organisations. These photographs are a small selection from the Tooth & Co. records.
Responding to community demand to see more art and history on the streets of Sydney, ICON is proud to be participants in the City of Sydney's creative hoardings program. The City acknowledges the Gadigal of the Eora Nation as Traditional Custodians of this place we now call Sydney, and we acknowledge their continued connection.
CREATIVE CITY SYDNEY
CITY OF SYDNEY

Sam Sutton, front board transfer.

Noah Nayef, noseblunt slide.

Jarrad Carlin, back lip shove-it.

VM004-Milic
MANGO AND HIS PRO SHOE SHOT BY KRIS BURKHARDT - SKATE@PROJECTDISTRIBUTION.COM.AU – WWW.LASTRESORTAB.COM

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